The Life of Christ
As Represented in Art

F. W. Farrar

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THE LIFE OF CHRIST

AS REPRESENTED IN ART

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LE BEAU DIEU D'AMIENS

From the sculpture on west front of Amiens cathedral.

THE LIFE OF CHRIST

AS REPRESENTED IN ART

BY

FREDERIC W. FARRAR, D.D., F.R.S.

LATE FELLOW OF TRINITY COLLEGE, CAMBRIDGE; DEAN OF CANTERBURY
AUTHOR OF 'THE LIFE OF CHRIST,' 'THE LIFE AND
WORK OF ST. PAUL,' ETC.

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TO

THE RIGHT HONOURABLE

THE SPEAKER OF THE HOUSE OF COMMONS

THESE PAGES

ARE GRATEFULLY AND RESPECTFULLY DEDICATED

PREFACE.

"Vagliami il lungo studio, e 'l grande amore."
—DANTE, *Inf.* I. 83.

I DO not in this book presume for a moment to intrude upon the functions of the Art Critic, or to enter into fields of technical inquiry outside the range of those studies in which my duty lies. I do not forget the rule of the younger Pliny: *De pictore, sculptore, fusore judicare nisi artifex non potest.*[1] Art is, indeed, a matter of common human concern, and every man of ordinary education has a right to an opinion, if not upon its technical qualities, yet at least upon the thoughts which it conveys and the influence which it exercises over his own mind.[2] I travelled on the Continent when I was a very young man, and from the first it was my habit to make notes — never, of course, intended for publication — on the chief pictures in the great continental galleries. Many of the pictures to which I refer in the following pages are described from careful personal examination, although

[1] Plin. *Epp.* I. 10.

[2] Mr. Holman Hunt, in a letter which I received from him in 1891, says: "It has always, increasingly with my experience, seemed both surprising and unfortunate that men of culture who are without pretence to knowledge of the technical qualities in Art, do not enough express their feelings about the works which sculptors and painters and indeed architects do. . . . England, of late years particularly, has suffered from want of large independent expression of feeling on Art."

I have frequently and intentionally adduced the words and opinions of others who have a greater right to be heard. This book has not been written from love of Art, deep as my love of Art is, but because I wished to illustrate the thoughts about religion, and especially about our Saviour Jesus Christ, of which Art has eternized the ever-varying phases. The great painters when, as was the case with many of them, they were men of deep religious feeling, have often preached mighty sermons. The import of their teaching may be familiar to those who are able to read it, but for the most part the old masters address the multitude in an unknown tongue. I have sometimes endeavoured by lectures to my own parishioners, and in provincial cities, to pave the way in the minds of others for that delight in, and consolation from, great works of Art which I have myself constantly enjoyed. I know by many testimonies that such efforts have been successful in making our National Gallery a source of pleasure and advantage to boys and youths of the working classes, who had previously looked on some of our richest possessions with a listless and unintelligent gaze. It is my hope that in this book I may extend that benefit to a larger number.

I say with Mons. Lafenestre, "Tout ce que nous pouvons faire, nous, pauvres écrivains, admirateurs des grands artistes, c'est d'apprendre à les aimer, c'est d'enseigner à les voir."[1] But my object has been more sacred than this. Art cannot deceive. It is an unerring self-revelation of the character both of nations and of individuals. Hypocrisy may veil itself in literature; it may lurk behind the outward conduct of men. But Art invariably betrays herself when she attempts to mislead us by mere pretence. The Art of every age and country infallibly reflects the tone, the temper, the religious attitude, of which it is the expression. In Art, insincerity and unreality become certain of detection when they try to pass themselves off as

[1] G. Lafenestre, *La peinture Italienne*, I. 7.

religion pure and undefiled. "Great nations," says Mr. Ruskin, "write their autobiographies in three manuscripts, — the book of their deeds, the book of their words, and the book of their art. Not one of these books can be understood unless we read the two others; but of the three, the only quite trustworthy one is the last."

If any one desires a near and striking proof of this fact, he has only to walk thoughtfully through Westminster Abbey. Let him read the pompous, futile, interminable, and often lying epitaphs of the eighteenth century, and compare them with the *In Christo* or *In pace* of the Catacombs, or the three words, *Cornelius Ep. Mart.*, which sufficed for the grave of a Pope, a Martyr, and a Saint. Let him contrast the eighteenth-century piles of incongruous statuary — their meaningless Paganism, their crude vulgarity, their conventional commonplace, and their affectation of being terribly at ease in Sion — with the noble images of dead Crusaders, their hands humbly folded upon their breast. The antithesis between the way in which life and death were regarded by an age of belief, however erring, and an age in which scepticism and worldliness were prevalent, is written on the walls and tombs of the Great Abbey in language which all may read.

My desire, then, has been, among other things, to indicate the influences, upon Christian Art, of the faithful or unfaithful, the pure or superstitious, the deeply devout or the wholly undevout, feelings of the epochs and the artists by whom it was produced. Such sketches of the treatment of the Life of Christ in Art as are here given should have a real importance as indicating the great phases of religious thought which have changed and are changing from age to age.

Among the numerous books which I have read and consulted I can scarcely include Lady Eastlake's edition of Mrs. Jameson's *History of Our Lord in Art*. I purposely refrained from making any use of it until my own manuscript was nearly complete, because it deals with

analogous though not identical considerations. My book was practically finished before I referred to it, — though I am well acquainted with Mrs. Jameson's other works; but, reading it after my own labours were concluded, I see that, as I expected, the object, the scope, and the manner of treatment adopted by that charming and accomplished writer differ so widely from my own, that I am in no sense going over ground already traversed.

Although Art properly includes sculpture, architecture, and music, it is chiefly, though not exclusively, of painting that I shall speak. My illustrations will be largely drawn from those great Italian masters of the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries whose supremacy is generally acknowledged. To the Dutch, German, and Flemish painters — deep as is the feeling expressed by men like Albrecht Dürer, Hans Memlinc, the Van Eycks, the Holbeins, and by Rembrandt at his best — I shall refer less frequently; and to the far inferior Spanish painters, with the exception of Velasquez, scarcely at all. I am in no sense pretending to write either a history of Art or an exhaustive treatise on one branch of it. I only desire to enhance in readers to whom the subject may be unfamiliar an intelligent appreciation of great works of Art, and to shew how they express and illustrate the thoughts of generations on the greatest and holiest subject which can occupy the mind of man.

CONTENTS.

PAGE

PREFACE . . . . . v–viii

BOOK I.

RESERVE OF THE EARLY CHRISTIANS IN PAINTING CHRIST.

CHRIST REPRESENTED BY SYMBOLS 3

THE FISHERMAN AND THE FISH 6

THE CROSS AND MONOGRAM 19

INDIRECT PAGAN TYPES 29

HISTORICO-SYMBOLIC TYPES FROM THE OLD TESTAMENT . 34

ALLUSIVE NEW TESTAMENT TYPES. THE GOOD SHEPHERD 37

SCENES FROM THE NEW TESTAMENT, IDEAL AND CONVENTIONAL 49

THIS RESERVE TAUGHT BY THE EARLY FATHERS . . . 54

REASONS FOR THIS RESERVE 61

BOOK II.

PERSONAL ASPECT OF THE SAVIOUR.

ALL TRADITION OF CHRIST'S PERSONAL ASPECT LOST IN THE CHURCH 67

PRETENDED AND LEGENDARY PICTURES OF CHRIST . . 79

ATTEMPTED PORTRAITS OF CHRIST 86

MOSAICS 89

YOUTHFUL AND BEARDED PICTURES OF CHRIST . . . 92

BOOK III.

FROM BYZANTINE ART TO THE RENAISSANCE.

PAGE

Byzantine Art, A.D. 527–1250 99

Margaritone of Arezzo, 1216–1293 109

The Dawn of the Renaissance. Niccolo Pisano; Duccio (1200–1330); Cimabue, 1240–1302 (?) 115

Giotto, 1266–1336 124

Progress of the Renaissance 129

BOOK IV.

CHRIST AND THE VIRGIN MOTHER.

The Madonna Dolorosa 146

The Madonna Regina. La Vergine Gloriosa. L'Incoronata 158

The Madonna Mother 162

The Virgin, Child, and St. John Baptist 178

Holy Families 187

Enthroned Madonnas and Holy Conversations . . 189

Ex Voto Pictures 209

BOOK V.

THE BIRTH AT BETHLEHEM.

The Annunciation 219

The Nativity 232

Adoration of the Shepherds 245

Adoration of the Magi 250

BOOK VI.

INCIDENTS OF THE INFANCY.

Circumcision and Presentation in the Temple . . 259

The Innocents and the Flight into Egypt . . . 263

The Return to Nazareth 271

The Boy Christ 279

Christ among the Doctors 284

BOOK VII.

SCENES OF THE MINISTRY.

PAGE

General Series 295
1. Giotto. 2. Duccio. 3. Fra Angelico.

Separate Incidents 304

The Baptism of Christ 305
The Temptation 310
The Sermon on the Mount 312
The Miracles 312
The Marriage of Cana 314
The Draught of Fishes 315
Miracles of Healing 317
The Multiplication of the Loaves 322
The Transfiguration 323
The Raising of Lazarus 327
Scenes from the Parables 329
Separate Incidents 329
The Ministry in General 331
Christ and the Magdalene 338

BOOK VIII.

THE LAST SUPPER

Washing the Disciples' Feet 343
The Last Supper 344

BOOK IX.

THE SUFFERING CHRIST.

The Last Scenes and the Suffering Christ, as treated in Early Christian Art 351
The Suffering Christ, as treated by Albrecht Dürer and others 360

The Agony in the Garden 374
The Trials and Mockings 376
The Flagellation 378
The Crown of Thorns 383
Ecce Homo 384
Stations of the Cross 386
The Crucifixion. General Thoughts 389

The Crucifixion in Art 407

BOOK X.

THE DEAD CHRIST.

PAGE

The Descent from the Cross 421

The Pietà and the Dead Christ, supported by the Virgin 424

The Descent into Hell 433

BOOK XI.

THE RISEN CHRIST.

The Resurrection 441

"Noli Me Tangere" 445

The Supper at Emmaus 448

The Incredulity of St. Thomas 451

The Ascension 453

BOOK XII.

THE LAST JUDGMENT.

Orcagna and others 459

Michael Angelo 464

CONCLUSION.

Ideals of Christ in Art 479

ILLUSTRATIONS

PRINTED IN THE TEXT

	PAGE
Pelican Symbol, from a signet ring	7
Phœnix „ „ „	7
Dove „ from the Catacombs	8
Fish and Anchor Symbol, from the Catacombs	8
Dove and Fish „ „ „	8
Ship and Pharos „ „ „	11
Fish and Anchor „ (two examples), from the Catacombs	11
Fish Symbols (three examples), from the Catacombs	12
Early Christian Lamp	13
Christ as a Fisherman—from a bas relief	14
„ „ from a gilt glass in the Catacombs	14
„ „ from the Catacombs	14
Bronze Baptismal Tesseræ	15
Eucharistic Carp, from the crypt of St. Lucina	17
„ Fish, from the Catacombs	17
Dove and Fish Symbol, from a gem in the British Museum	17
Vine Symbol, from the Catacombs	18
Egyptian Crux Ansata	26
Crosses (ten different examples)	26
Labarum on a coin of Constantine	26
Gemmed and Flowering Cross, 8th century, from the catacomb of St. Pontianus	27
Christ as Orpheus, from the catacomb of St. Callistus	30
Cupid and Psyche, from catacomb of St. Domitilla	33

PAGE

Old Testament types of Christ—
Moses, from the catacomb of SS. Peter and Marcellinus . 34
„ from the Catacombs 35
Jonah, from the catacomb of St. Lucina 35
„ from a 4th century gem 35
Daniel, from the sarcophagus of Junius Bassus . . 36
Abraham's Sacrifice, from the catacomb of SS. Peter and Marcellinus 36
Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego, from the catacomb of St. Domitilla 37
Hermes Kriophoros, from the tomb of the Nasones . . . 38
The Good Shepherd, 4th century statue, from the Lateran . 38
„ „ Apollo Aristeus, 2nd century . . . 39
„ „ with a kid, etc. 39
„ „ three early Christian gems . . . 40
„ „ from an early tomb 40
The Good Shepherd and the Seasons, from catacomb of St. Callistus 42
Christ surrounded by vines, from the Catacombs . . 42
Good Shepherd, from the catacomb of St. Lucina . . . 43
„ from catacomb of SS. Peter and Marcellinus . 43
Christ the Lamb (five figures) from sarcophagus of Junius Bassus 46
„ from the catacomb of St. Domitilla . . 47
„ „ tomb of Galla Placidia . . . 47
„ from a glass cup 47
Combination of Symbols, from a 2nd century gem in the Kircher Museum . . . 48
„ „ from 4th century sarcophagus at Velletri 48
The Raising of Lazarus (three examples), from the Catacombs . 50
Moses striking the Rock „ „ . 50
The Good Shepherd „ „ . 50
Christ and the Samaritan Woman „ „ . 51
„ teaching the Law „ „ . 51
Example of the Youthful Christ „ „ . 51
Christ crowned with Thorns „ „ . 52

PAGE

Christ seated in Glory, from the Catacombs 52
„ teaching the Law „ „ 52
Mosaic of Christ, 1st century „ „ 86
Attempted portrait of Christ, from catacomb of St. Callistus . 86
Another Example from the Catacombs 87
Attempted Portrait of Christ, from catacomb of St. Pontianus . 87
„ „ from an ivory in the Vatican Museum 88
Wounded Lamb, 6th century 90
Pagan Caricature, from the Kircher Museum 94
Caricature on a Gem 94
Inscription in the Gelotian House 95
Greek form of Benediction 116
Madonna and Child. Duccio 119
„ „ Cimabue 121
Madonna Dolorosa. Botticelli 149
„ „ Carlo Dolci 156
„ of the Crescent Moon. Albrecht Dürer . . . 161
Madonna. Perugino 163
Casa Conestabile Madonna. Raphael 164
Madonna Nourrice. Luini 167
„ „ Bissolo 174
„ of the Rocks. Leonardo da Vinci 179
Virgin and Child. Michael Angelo 182
Holy Family. Fra Filippo Lippi 185
Enthroned Madonna. Ercole di Guilio Grandi . . . 199
Santa Conversazione. Andrea Mantegna 201
Frari Madonna. Giovanni Bellini 203
Ex Voto Madonna (Roncaglia family). Moretto . . . 213
The Annunciation. From a sarcophagus at Ravenna . . 220
„ Fra Angelico 221
„ Fra Filippo Lippi 224
„ Sir E. Burne Jones 231
The Nativity. From the Catacombs 233
„ Piero della Francesca 236
„ Antonio Rossellini 238

PAGE
The Nativity. Andrea della Robbia 239
The Adoration of the Shepherds, from a bas relief in the Lateran 245
„ „ Fiorenzo di Lorenzo . . 249
The Adoration of the Magi, from church of St. Vitalis, Ravenna 250
„ „ from 4th century sarcophagus . 251
„ „ (two examples), from Catacombs . 251
The Presentation in the Temple, from a 5th century mosaic . 261
Repose in Egypt. Albrecht Dürer 272
The Shadow of Death. W. Holman Hunt 276
The Boy Christ. Bernardino Luini 281
„ Cesare da Sesto 282
„ Guido Reni 283
Christ among the Doctors, from a 5th century mosaic . . 284
„ „ from MS. of St. Gregory of Nazianzus 285
Baptism of Christ, from 5th century sarcophagus . . . 305
„ from Catacombs 306
„ (6th century), in the Cathedral at Ravenna . 306
„ (7th century), Catacomb of St. Pontianus . 307
„ Verrocchio 308
„ Piero dei Franceschi 309
Temptation of Christ, from 9th century MS. 311
Miracle at Cana, from sarcophagus at the Lateran . . . 313
Miraculous Draught of Fishes, from 6th century mosaic at Ravenna 316
Casting out the Evil Spirit, from a 5th century ivory . . 317
Casting out of Evil Spirits, from the Church of St. Apollinaris . 318
Healing the Paralytic „ „ „ . 318
Raising of Jairus's Daughter, from a sculpture . . . 319
Healing the Blind, from 4th century sarcophagus in the Lateran 320
The Impotent Man carrying his Bed (two examples), from the Catacombs 320
The Healing of the Impotent Man, from sarcophagus in the Lateran 321
Feeding the Multitude, from sarcophagus in the Lateran . . 322
The Transfiguration, from the Church of St. Apollinaris . . 324

PAGE

The Transfiguration, Mosaic from Church of St. Catherine's monastery on Mount Sinai . . . 324
„ Fra Angelico 325
The Raising of Lazarus, from relief in Chichester Cathedral . 328
The Pharisee and the Publican, from the Church of St. Apollinaris 330
Christ blessing Children, from sarcophagus in Villa Borghese . 333
Christ and the Samaritan Woman, from the Catacombs . . 333
The Rich young Ruler, from 9th century MS. 334
The Woman taken in Adultery, from mosaic in St. Apollinaris . 335
The Entry into Jerusalem, from the tomb of Junius Bassus . 351
The Last Supper (6th century example) 352
Washing the Disciples' Feet, from the Arles sarcophagus . . 353
The Denial of Peter, from sarcophagus in the Lateran . . 353
Carrying the Cross „ „ . . 354
The Crucifixion, from Syriac Bible of 6th century . . . 355
The Resurrection, from 4th century sarcophagus . . . 356
„ from 8th century ivory at Munich . . 356
The Disciples at Emmaus, 9th century miniature at Munich . 357
The Incredulity of St. Thomas, from Library at Munich . . 357
The Ascension, from Syriac Bible at Florence 358
The Man of Sorrows. Albrecht Dürer 361
The Last Supper. „ 363
The Agony in the Garden. „ 364
The Arrest. „ 365
Pilate shewing Christ to the People. Albrecht Dürer . . 367
The Crucifixion. Albrecht Dürer 369
The Agony. Correggio 375
Pilate washing his Hands, from ancient sarcophagus . . 377
The Flagellation. Bernardino Luini 380
Christ at the Column. Velasquez 381
Ecce Homo. Guido Reni 384
Descent from the Cross. Relief by Benedetto Antelami . . 421
The Pietà. Michael Angelo 425
„ Francia 427
The Dead Christ. Bissolo 430

PAGE

Descent into Hell. Albrecht Dürer 435

The Resurrection. Albrecht Dürer 443

The Last Judgment. Michael Angelo 465

Dies Domini. Sir E. Burne Jones 478

Types of Christ—

The Ascetic (Byzantine example) 485

The Avenging. Michael Angelo 486

ILLUSTRATIONS

PRINTED SEPARATELY FROM THE TEXT

Le Beau Dieu d'Amiens	*Frontispiece*
	TO FACE PAGE
Margaritone's Picture	110
Madonna of the Pomegranate. Giovanni Bellini	154
„ of the Star. Fra Angelico	158
„ della Cesta. Correggio	172
Coronation of the Virgin. Fra Filippo Lippi	192
Ansidei Madonna. Raphael	198
Madonna della Misericordia. Fra Bartolommeo	206
„ of the Rosary. Domenichino	208
Ex Voto Madonna (Meyer family). Holbein	210
The Annunciation. Carlo Crivelli	226
„ Rossetti	230
The Nativity. Sandro Botticelli	237
The Adoration of the Shepherds. Correggio	248
The Adoration of the Magi. Sir E. Burne Jones	256
Triumph of the Innocents. W. Holman Hunt	268
Carpenter's Shop. Sir J. E. Millais	274
Christ among the Doctors. W. Holman Hunt	290
The Last Supper. Leonardo da Vinci	346
The Crucifixion. Martin Schongauer	414
„ Velasquez	418
The Risen Christ. Francesco Mantegna	442
The Last Judgment. Orcagna?[1]	460

[1] Burckhardt says that this picture is ascribed to Orcagna (*The Cicerone*, E.T. p. 28); "but according to Crowe and Cavalcaselle by a Sienese artist impossible to distinguish from the Lorenzetti." Milanesi, *Opere de G. Vasari*, i. 467, assigns it to Bernardo Daddi († 1350 ?).

Book I.

RESERVE OF THE EARLY CHRISTIANS IN PAINTING CHRIST.

"Die Menschen sind in Poesie und Kunst nur so lange produktiv als sie religiös sind." — Goethe.

I.

RESERVE IN PAINTING CHRIST. A.D. 1–400.

Rev. i. 17: "And when I saw Him, I fell at His feet as one dead."

THE representation of Christ, directly or indirectly, is the main object of Christian Art in every stage, because Christian thought has turned in all epochs, and without interruption, to

> "Him first, Him last, Him midst, and without end."

Christian Art, as long as it was sincere and devout, might have adopted the words of the modern poet: —

> "Yea, through life, death, through sorrow and through sinning,
> Christ shall suffice me, for He hath sufficed;
> Christ is the end, for Christ was the beginning;
> Christ the beginning, for the end is Christ."

But even when devoutness had vanished and religious sincerity was well-nigh dead — even when Art not only refused to be the bondslave of ecclesiastics, but thought it beneath her to be the handmaid of religion — she still used sacred themes to display her own skill and erudition. The charm of the Gospel story was felt to be infinite and inexhaustible, and painters borrowed their "motives" from scenes in the Life of Christ, while they tried to supply the lack of inspiration by science and technique. But the feelings with which the subject was approached, and the methods adopted to set it forth, have gone through vast and singular variations.

The first point which I desire to emphasize is that the primitive Christians shrank altogether from any direct

presentment of the human Christ. Little by little, step by step, this reluctance was overcome; but we may note seven well-marked stages of feeling, involving a development continued through many centuries, before any Christian artist presumed to represent the Son of God, the Saviour of the World, in a purely realistic aspect, as He lived and moved through the stages of His earthly life. Among the latest specimens of such realism, pushed to the extreme of irreverence, may be mentioned the illustrations to the popular edition of Renan's *Vie de Jesus* by Godefroy Durand.[1] They are, to a high degree, clever and striking, but they seem expressly designed to impress vividly on the minds of all who see them that the Lord of Glory was a mortal man and nothing more.

i. In the earliest stages of Christianity, Christ was only shadowed forth symbolically, or *Ideographically*.

ii. He was next represented indirectly, and even by Pagan analogies.

iii. He was then set forth *Historico-symbolically* by Old Testament types.

iv. Then *Allusively*, by reference to New Testament parables.

v. Then *Ideally*, by figures which stood immediately for Christ, but in a manner purely conventional, and with no attempt to indicate His absolute semblance.

vi. It was only after several centuries that artists began to paint Him directly, though with extreme reserve and reverence.

vii. By the eighth century, — but not heartily or unanimously till then, — the Church had learned to accept the view argued by St. John of Damascus: "Since He who, being in the form of God, is, by the excellence of His nature exempt from quantity, quality, and magnitude, yet took upon Him the form of a servant, and put on the fashion of a body, contracting Himself to quantity and quality; therefore represent Him in pictures, and set Him

[1] Paris, 1870.

forth to be gazed on openly, who *willed* to be gazed upon. Paint His humiliation, His nativity, His baptism, His transfiguration, His agonies which ransomed us, the miracles which, though wrought by His fleshly ministry, proved His divine power and nature, His sepulture, His resurrection, His ascension, — paint all these things in colours as well as in speech, in pictures as well as in books." [1]

It is not, however, until the days of the later Renaissance that we find anything approaching to an entirely realistic picture of Jesus; and not till the nineteenth century that we find pictures, which, like those of Veretschlagen, — whatever their intention, — can only be regarded as degrading and profane.

I do not assert that these seven stages are separated by marked chronological epochs. Some of them overlapped each other, and were to a certain extent synchronistic; but I shall adduce proof that they represent changing phases of opinion, which ended in a revolution of feeling so absolute as the late, yet universal, practice of all but exclusively identifying the image of Christ, not with our idea of the Lord of Glory, but with that "hour and power of darkness," when, in utter humiliation, He hung between the two robbers on His cross of shame.

Early Christianity looked on Art with no friendly eye. The exercise of *Pagan* Art was of course forbidden to all who had been "illuminated," *i.e.* baptized; but the remarks of Tertullian in his tract against the painter Hermogenes, shew that Art itself was not in high regard. Yet it could not be suppressed. It is imperiously demanded by the sense of beauty which God has implanted within us, and men refuse, and rightly refuse, to be debarred from this innocent method of satisfying their intellectual and spiritual needs. But it may be fearlessly asserted that for more than four centuries after the Ascension, orthodox and well-instructed Christians of every condition, rich and

[1] John Damascen., Orat. III., *De imaginibus*, Opp. I. 349; Didron, *Icon.* 239.

poor, learned and unlearned, regarded it as an act of irreverence, if not of actual profanity, to paint Christ in His purely human aspect. This is clearly proved to us by the records of Christian thought which are now fast disappearing from the walls of the Catacombs.

Pératé distinguishes the Art of the Catacombs under four epochs.

1. The first, which covers the two first centuries, shews the freest invention and most elaborate *technique*. Its masterpieces are found in the cemeteries of Priscilla and Domitilla, and the crypts of Lucina and Prætextatus.

2. The second epoch ends with the Edict of Milan (A.D. 313), which gave toleration to Christianity. It is more ecclesiastical in character, but the profounder symbolism is expressed with far inferior skill. Its chief specimens are to be found in the Chamber of the Sacraments, in the Catacomb of St. Callistus.

3. The third epoch embraces the victorious period of the Church, from Constantine (A.D. 324) to the sack of Rome by Alaric (A.D. 410). It shews superior technical skill expended upon the basilicas and sarcophagi, but does not equal the first epoch in fineness of design and colouring.

4. The art of the fourth epoch, from the fifth to the tenth century, is of the crudest description, and reveals a complete degeneration.

(*i.*) Christ was first represented ideographically or by Symbols.

"Things more excellent than any image are expressed through images." —Jamblichus.

"Emblems, symbols, types," it has been said, "have this in common: they are the representative of something else for which they stand. Emblems and symbols often differ only in their mode of application; thus, the palm-branch is an *emblem* of victory, but taken in a Christian sense it is a *symbol* significant of the victory of our faith.

The anchor may be a mere *emblem* of Hope, but when it is put for the hope of a Christian it becomes a *symbol*. A symbol is of the highest order when it expresses a religious dogma; . . . of the lowest, when it is put for a received fact, real or legendary. Thus, the keys as a symbol of St. Peter, or the knife of St. Bartholomew, are of the lowest order." [1]

The earliest passage relating to Christian symbolism [2] is found in St. Clement of Alexandria, who died about A.D. 211. Speaking, in his *Pædagogus*,[3] of Christian signet-rings, he says that Christians should wear only one ring, and that on the lowest joint of the little finger, and adds: —

"Let the engraving upon the gem of your ring be either a dove, or a fish, or a ship running before the wind, or a musical lyre, the device used by Polycrates, or a ship's anchor, which Seleucus had carved upon his signet. And if the device represent a man fishing, it will remind us of an apostle, and of boys saved from water." [4] I append

[1] Barlow, *Essays on Symbolism*, 6.

[2] I exclude Rev. vii. 3, on which see King, *The Gnostics*, p. 135. Münter (*Die Sinnbilder der Christen*) thinks that the "signet of the living God" impressed on the forehead of the 144,000 was the monogram of Christ. In Byzantine art it is represented by X (Didron *Manuel*, p. 244). But the monogram of Christ did not come into use before the fourth century. The seal was (as St. John says) "His Father's name." An ancient tradition explains it by Ezek. ix. 4. In the painted glass of St. Denis the Angel is shewn stamping a mark on the forehead of the elect; the legend explains the subject as the sign of the letter T (the Hebrew *thau*, ת), which was originally a cross (+). Vulg. "Signa *thau* super frontes."

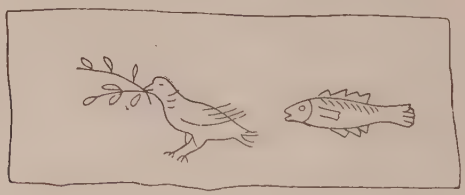
[3] *Pæd.* III. 11, § 59.

[4] On the absence of the cross from this list I will speak *infra*, § 2. The pelican (on which see Alt, *Die Heiligenbilder*, 56) and the monogram of Christ were of later date. There are no certain instances of the monogram before the age of Constantine. The peacock and phœnix were also later. The peacock was probably chosen as a type of immortality, from the old notion that its flesh was

some early specimens of these symbols from the Catacombs.

There was a direct intention in this advice of the learned Alexandrian Father. The minds of all men, especially

of the uneducated, yearn for those sensible images which serve in some measure to shadow forth the Divine.[1] It may be that in the second century, Christians, who chiefly



belonged to the poorer classes, had but few among them who were trained in the difficult work of carving gems with artistic skill. Two things a Christian had to avoid. It was not his object to give needless offence, or to incur needless peril, by flaunting in the face of the heathen those symbols of his religion, which were most certain to be derided and misunderstood; and if he bought a signet-

incorruptible. Perhaps for the same reason, angels are often represented with wings of peacocks' feathers. See, too, Rev. iv. 8.

[1] See Rom. i. 20: "The invisible things of Him are clearly seen, being perceived through the things that are made." Orig. *Hom. III. in Cant.*, Qu. I., art. i., § 9; Perret, VI. 94.

ring, it was essential that it should neither be degraded by heathen pollutions, such as Clement proceeds to mention, nor carved with the figures of heathen idols.[1] No one could object to emblems which had been worn by a Polycrates or a Seleucus, and yet in looking at them the convert would be reminded of the most sacred truths of his religion.[2] Christians rejoiced to reflect Scriptural metaphors in pictorial symbols,[3] especially if such symbols would awaken no needless suspicion among their heathen contemporaries.

The naturalness of symbolism is illustrated by language, all of which is ultimately interjectional, imitative, or metaphorical. The metaphors become obscured in the course of time into "a mass of arbitrary, opaque, uninteresting conventionalisms, but all early language thrills with poetry and flashes with the unconscious play of the fancy of the imagination."[4] "Every language," says Jean Paul Richter, "is a dictionary of faded metaphors." Aristotle wrote long ago that "the utterances of the voice are symbols of the passion in the soul."[5] "As we go back in history," says Emerson, "language becomes more picturesque, until its infancy, when it is all poetry, and all spiritual facts are represented by natural symbols"; and

[1] Lactant. *Instt.* I. 21: "Apud eos ipsos etiam vitia religiosa sunt." See Wisdom xv. 5, 6: "For neither did the mischievous image of men deceive us, nor an image spotted with divers colours, the painter's fruitless labours; the sight whereof escheats fools to lust after it. . . . Both they that make them, they that desire them, and they that worship them, are lovers of evil things."

[2] See, on this branch of the subject, Garrucci, *Storia dell' Arte Cristiana*, Vol. I., Bk. iii.; *Del Simbolo*, pp. 155–258; Alt, *Die Heiligenbilder*, 48–87. Symbols long continued after regular paintings had become common. Many are, for instance, found in the archspandrils of S. Apollinare in Classe at Ravenna.

[3] "Quicquid in representatione rerum gestarum neque ad historias, neque ad naturae veritatem proprie referri potest, figuratam esse cognoscas."— Augustine.

[4] See my *Chapters on Language*, pp. 176–208; *Origin of Language*, pp. 116–166; Victor Cousin, *Cours de Philosophie*, III., leçon xx.

[5] Arist. *De Interpr.*, I. i.

so, too, Carlyle: "Language is the Flesh-garment of Thought, and Imagination weaves this fleshly garment."

The explanation of all symbolism lies ultimately in the fact, so finely stated by the Son of Sirach, "All things are double one against another, and God hath made nothing imperfect." "So look upon all the works of the Most High, and there are two and two, one against another." [1] It is needless to dwell long on this principle, for it has been expressed by two of the greatest poets. Dante sings: —

"Le cosi tutte quante
Hann' ordine tra loro; e questo è forma
Che l' universo a Dio fa simigliante."

And again: —

"Così parlar conviensi al vostro ingegno,
Perocchè solo da sensato apprende
Ciò che fa poscia d' intelletto degno." [2]

And Milton writes the words which might stand as the motto of Butler's *Analogy*: —

"What if earth
Be but the shadow of heaven, and things thereon
Each to the other like, more than on earth is thought?"

The common symbol of the Dove recalled the dove of Noah, and was an emblem of Innocence, and of the Holy Spirit, and sometimes of the Twelve Apostles, with reference to Matt. x. 16, "Be ye harmless as doves." It also stood for Peace, and for the faithful.[3] It was not an emblem of Christ.

The Anchor was a natural emblem of hope, and seems

[1] Ecclus. xlii. 24; xxxiii. 15.

[2] "All things whatsoever have an order among themselves, and this is form, which makes the universe resemble God." — *Parad.* I. 103–105 "Thus doth it befit to speak to your understanding, because by sense only doth it apprehend what it afterwards makes meet for the understanding." — *Parad.* IV. 40–43. Dante is here thinking of St. Thomas Aquinas, *Summa*, I. 84, i. 6, etc.

[3] Ps. lv. 6; Cant. ii. 16, etc.

to have been used on the tombs of those whose names included the word Elpis, "hope," as Elpidius and Elpizusa.[1] Perhaps, too, in later times the ring and transverse bar of the Anchor recalled the *crux ansata*, or "handled cross."[2]

Ship and Pharos.

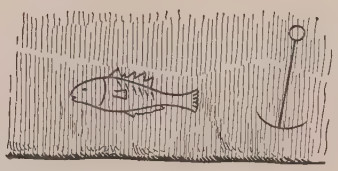
The Ship stood for the Church, and for the voyage of the life safely ended in the harbour of peaceful death.

The Lyre recalled the attractive power of Christ (John xii. 32), and also represented the human body: [3] —

> "Strange that a harp of a thousand strings
> Should keep in tune so long."

None of these, except the first, was, or subsequently became, a distinctive symbol of Christ Himself.

Of the somewhat later symbol of Christ as "the Lamb of God," we shall speak hereafter; but of all early Chris-



tian symbols the *Fish* was the most frequent and the favourite.[4] It assumed many forms, of which specimens are here furnished from ancient Christian tombs, and its

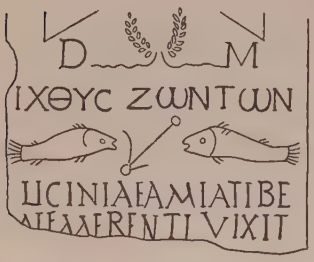
[1] Heb. vi. 18, 19.

[2] The Anchor was also an emblem of the security of faith; hence Epiphanius gave the title "Anchored" (ἀγκυρωτός) to his book on the faith.

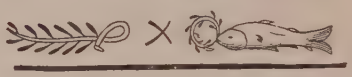
[3] Euseb. *De Laud. Constant. Imp.*

[4] See De Rossi, *Spicilegium Solesmense*, II.; *De Christ. Monum. Piscem Exhibentibus.*

symbolism was manifold, being applied sometimes to Christ, and sometimes to the Christian as saved by Christ. It continued to be a common symbol down to the days of Constantine, and was revived in the Middle Ages and in modern times.[1]



As an emblem of Christian-



ity it involved an immediate reference to baptism. Christ, in calling His Apostles after the miraculous draught of fishes, had said, "Follow me, and I will make you fishers of men." He had also spoken of the Church under the

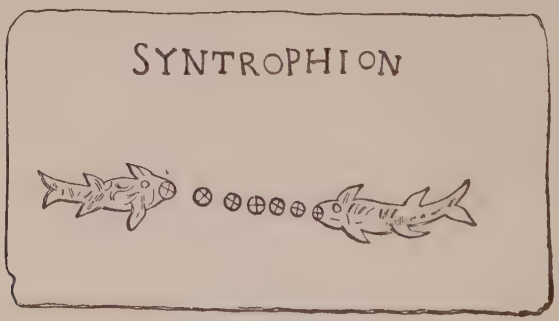


figure of the Draw-net full of fish good and bad.[2] In the earliest Christian hymn known to us, that given by Clement

[1] For authorities, see Martigny, s.vv. *Poisson*, *Eucharistie*, *Acrostiche*, *Pêcheur;* Kraus, s.vv. *Fischer*, *Fischfang*. The subject is exhaustively treated by Costadoni (*Sopra il Pesce*, Calogiera, XLI. 247); by De Rossi and Pitra, in the *Spicilegium Solesmense;* and by Polidori, *Sul pesce come simb. di Crist. e dei Christiani*. For pictures from the Catacombs of Christ as the Fisher, see De Rossi, II., tavv. xiv., xv. The design is still used on papal signets.

[2] Matt. xiii. 48; comp. Jer. xvi. 16; Martigny, *Pêcheur*, and *Dict. of Christian Antiquities*, I. 674.

of Alexandria at the end of his *Pædagogus*, Christ is addressed as —

> "Fisher of men, the Blest,
> Out of the world's unrest,
> Out of sin's troubled sea,
> Taking us, Lord, to Thee.
> . . . . . .
> With choicest fish good store
> Drawing the net to shore."

St. Cyril of Jerusalem says that Christ catches us with a hook, not to slay us, but after slaying to make us live.[1]

When Christ was regarded as the Divine Fisherman, Christians themselves were spoken of as *pisciculi*, "little fishes." "We little fishes," says Tertullian, "according to *our Fish*, Jesus Christ, are born in water, nor have we safety in any other way than by remaining in water."[2] It will be remembered that, on the contrary, the soul of man is represented by St. James[3] as drawn aside and enticed, — rather "lured and dragged out," — to gasp and die upon the shore when he has greedily swallowed the bait of the Evil One. When Bonosus, the friend of St. Jerome, retired to an island hermitage, Jerome wrote of him, "Bonosus, as the son of *the Fish*, . . . seeks watery places."[4]

Christian lamp.

[1] See the appended woodcuts.

[2] *De Bapt.* I.: "Piscis natus aquis auctor baptismatis ipse est." — Orientius.

[3] James i. 14: δελεαζόμενος καὶ ἐξελκόμενος.

[4] Jer. *Ep.* XLIII.

Athanasius the Sinaite says "the baptized are reptiles (ἕρπετα) fished for the nurture of God by those who were once fishermen and are now Apostles."[1]

From a sarcophagus.

St. Gregory of Nazianzus speaks of the martyrs as being baptized in their blood, and of other Christians as fish for whom the water of baptism suffices.[2]

From a gilt glass.

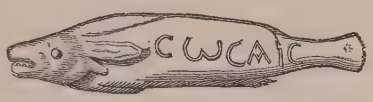
Catacomb of St. Callistus.

The bronze and glass fishes which have been found in the Catacombs, of which one bears on its side the word σώσαις (mayst thou save!), are believed by Martigny to have been baptismal tesseræ, and to have been sometimes worn round the neck as amulets. On the fine old gate of San Zeno at Verona, with its very interesting carv-

[1] *Hexameron.* [2] *De Resurrect.* LII.

ings, is a bas-relief of two women, each representing the Church (?), one of whom is giving suck to two infants, and the other *to two fishes*.

It will be observed that the Fish is sometimes a dolphin, sometimes a carp. As a dolphin it is — or it was among the Pagans — an emblem of protection, with reference to the legend of Arion. The Dolphin was regarded as of all fish the friendliest to man.[1] When the fish is a carp, it indicates Christ giving Himself for the food of the soul. When, as on old baptismal fonts in Iceland and Fünen, three fish are arranged in a circle or triangle, they further indicate the Trinity and Eternity of God.[2]



Bronze baptismal tessera.

But the Fish is also used to symbolize Christ Himself, especially during the first four centuries. Later, this symbol becomes less frequent, and for a time almost disappears.[3]

For this symbolic use of the Fish there were various reasons.

i. It may perhaps have been for a long time a part of the *disciplina arcani* — *i.e.* one of the secrets of Christianity — that the Fish, in its Greek name ΙΧΘΥC acrostically represented the words Ἰησοῦς Χριστὸς Θεοῦ Ὑιὸς Σωτήρ, "Jesus Christ, the Son of God the Saviour."[4] The first

[1] φιλανθρωπότατος. Athen. *Deipnos.* XIII. 30; Pitra, *Spicil. Solesm.* III. 15. Paulinus of Nola alludes to this in his letter to his spiritual father, Delphinus. See, further, Martigny, s.v. *Dauphin.*

[2] Münter, *Sinnbilder*, pp. 48–52.

[3] It is a remarkable proof of this that in the mnemonic lines of St. Damasus (Carm. VI.) about the symbols and names of Christ, the Fish does not occur, though he mentions —

Virga, Columna, Manus, Petra, . . .
Vinea, Pastor, Ovis, Pax, Radix, Vitis, Oliva,
Fons, Paries, Agnus, Vitulus, Leo, . . .
Rete, Lapis, Domus, omnia Christus Jesus.

[4] The acrostic is found in the Sibylline verses, VIII. 217–250. See *Spicil. Solesm.* II. 173.

writer who points out this fact is Optatus of Milevis, about A.D. 384.[1] "The Greek word Fish," he says, "in one word by each letter embraces a crowd of sacred names." Melito of Sardis (A.D. 160) in his *Key to Metaphors* says, "Fish: Christ." Origen long before had written, "Christ is metaphorically called the "Fish."[2] St. Augustine alludes to the same fact, and says that Jesus Christ is called Fish "because He was able to live in the abyss of this mortality as in the depths of water, that is without sin."[3]

ii. The Fish indicated Christ in His manhood; for men are compared to fishes merged in the Sea of Life,[4] and caught by the hook of death.[5] It alluded to Him as Saviour, with reference to the fish of Tobias which drove away the demons; to the fish which provided the stater for St. Peter;[6] to the two small fishes with which Christ fed the multitude; and to the broiled fish prepared for His disciples after His resurrection on the Lake of Galilee. The latter was supposed to indicate His passion. "*Piscis assus*," says the Venerable Bede, "*est Christus passus*."[7] The Fish had further an Eucharistic significance, as will be seen in the accompanying woodcuts. Dean Stanley thinks that a fish was eaten with the bread and wine in the early Eucharistic feasts, in remembrance of which there was a fish known in the Middle Ages as "*the Paschal pickerel*," from the tradition that Christ had substituted a fish for

[1] *Adv. Parmen. Contra Donatistas*, III. 2; see Stanley, *Christian Institutions*, p. 51; Wharton Marriott, *Essay on the Fish of Autun*.

[2] Χριστὸς ὁ τροπικῶς λεγόμενος ἰχθύς. *In Matt.* iii., p. 586.

[3] See *De Civit. Dei*, XVIII. 25.

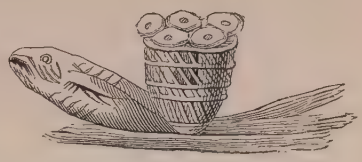
[4] St. Ambr. *in Luc.* v.; Orig. *in Matt.* xiii. 10.

[5] Greg. *Magn. Moral. Hom.* XXV. in evv. ii.

[6] Auct. Anon. *De promiss. et benedict.* His works, which belong to the fifth century, are printed after those of Prosper of Aquitaine.

[7] Following Aug. in *Joann.*, Tr. CXXIII., comp. Greg. *l.c.*: "quasi tribulatione assatus." See Theophanes Kerameus, *Hom.* 36: ὁ δὲ ἐπικείμενος ἰχθὺς εἰκὼν ἦν. . . . Ἰχθυὸς τρόπον ἐν τῇ τοῦ βίου θαλάσσῃ ἐπολιτεύσατο τῆς ἁλμυρᾶς ἁμαρτίας διαμείνας ἀμέτοχος. Garrucci, I. 156. See, too, Severianus of Gabala, quoted in Bottari, *Rom. Sott.* III. 30.

the Paschal Lamb at the Last Supper. To this there are many ancient allusions. "He," says Paulinus of Nola, "is the true bread, and the fish of the living water." In the famous Greek inscription from the cemetery of Autun we read, "Divine offspring of the heavenly Fish take the sweet food of the Saviour of saints; eat, drink, holding in both hands the fish." St. Augustine speaks of the Eucharist as "the solemn feast in which is shewn that Fish whom the faithful on earth eat when taken out of the deep."[1] St. Jerome, in words which illustrate the accompanying woodcut, speaks of him "who carries the body of Christ in an osier basket and His blood in a vase of glass."[2] And, not to multiply instances, we find a marked allusion to Christ as the Mystic Fish, in the earliest known Christian inscription of any length, — that discovered in 1882 by Professor Ramsay on the tomb of Abercius, Bishop of Hieropolis, who died about A.D. 160. In this inscription the old Bishop says, — for he dictated in his own lifetime the epitaph for his tomb, — "Faith led me everywhere, and everywhere served up to me for food



Eucharistic carp, with basket of bread (*mamphilla*). Crypt of St. Lucina.

Eucharistic Fish. Crypt of St. Cornelius.

From a gem in the British Museum. The victorious soul resting on Christ, the Divine Fish.

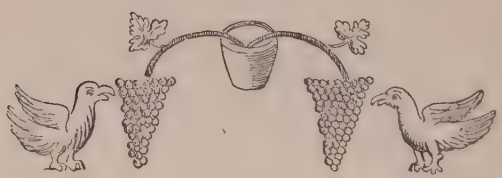
[1] Aug. *Confess.* XIII. 23.

[2] The anonymous author who is confused with St. Prosper of Aquitaine speaks of Christ as "qui satiavit ex se ipso discipulos, et toti se obtulit mundo *ἰχθύν*."

a Fish from the fountain, very large and pure, which a pure Virgin grasped."[1]

It is curious, as Bishop Münter points out, that in the Talmud, the Messiah is called *Dag* or Fish; and Abarbanel, in his commentary on Daniel, connects His appearance with the constellation Pisces.

Another common symbol of Christ is naturally the Vine. "I am the Vine: ye are the branches." It indicated the joyous and festive character of the Christian Faith, its variety, its fragrance, its rich diffusiveness, its inspiring power. "What the early Christians valued, what they felt, was a new moral influence, a new life stealing through their veins, a new health imparted to their frames, a new courage breathing in their faces, like wine to a wearied labourer, like sap in the hundred branches of a spreading tree, like juice in the thousand clusters of a spreading vine."[2]



From the Catacombs.

There were many later symbols of Christ which had not occurred to the simple imagination of the early Christians. Among these is the griffin, indicative of His Divine and

[1] It is from the reference of the fish to Christ that the font ("ut quae aqua fuerat, a pisce etiam piscina vocitetur," Optat. III. 62) is called *piscina*, as well as the *infundibulum* to the south of the Holy Table. The almond-shaped glory (*mandorla*), the aureole which surrounds divine figures in paintings, is called a *vesica piscis*, a shape used in all ecclesiastical rings and seals. The general notion of encircling the heads of divine and saintly figures in the *nimbus* and enveloping them with the aureole, or *mandorla*, is natural. Comp. Verg. *Æn.* II. 615: "Jam summas arces Tritonia, respice, Pallas Insedit, nimbo effulgens."

[2] Stanley, *Christ. Inst.*, p. 260.

Human Nature, as combining the eagle head with the lion body; as Dante says: —

"La fiera
Ch' è sola una persona in due Nature." [1]

(*ii.*) The Cross and the Monograms.

Ezek. ix. 4, 6: Et signa Thau super frontes virorum. . . . Omnem autem super quem videritis Thau ne occidatis.

"Crux fidelis inter omnes arbor una nobilis."
— Venantius.

I have said that some of the varying ancient phases of representation co-existed side by side. This is conspicuously the case with the stage of symbolism. It continued long after regular pictures had begun. Two symbols continued for ages to be especially common, of which I have not yet spoken. They were not generally adopted, even if they appeared at all, until after the Peace of the Church at the beginning of the fourth century. I mean the cross and the monogram of Christ.[2]

It must be remembered that the cross was in itself an object of utter horror even to the Pagans. It was not until after the days of corruption had begun in the Western world, that the Romans borrowed from the East the infinitely degrading punishment of crucifixion and impalement. This form of execution had been specially predominant among the Assyrians, who were the most brutal of all the ancient conquerors. We see it represented on their monuments with revolting callousness. It was felt to be something far more execrable than all other forms of capital punishment, however cruel they might be. An inexpressible hideousness attached to its lingering shame. In it a human being, with the image of God upon him, was brutally nailed to the wood, — naked, or more rarely with

[1] Dante, *Purg.* XXXI. 80. "Duo nature: di leone e di aquila = umana e divina (di Cristo)." — Scartazzini.

[2] For fullest details, see Stockbauer, *Kunstgesch. des Kreuzes*, pp. 81–141.

only a cloth round his loins, — and was exposed helplessly to every form of insult. His anguish, which can hardly be described or conceived, might continue for days together. During all that time the frightfulness of death in its most abject form stared him in the face, and was complicated by every variety and intensity of pain. Crucifixion was looked upon as worse even than burning. It was reckoned the most lingering, most agonizing, most execrable, most slavish form of death.[1] No more cynical and fiendish blasphemy against the divine dignity of human nature could possibly be devised. On no freedman could it be inflicted for any crime however horrible. Philo says that Moses had permitted it for the worst offences as the most awful penalty he could imagine. No wonder that the very name *Crux* is connected with the verb "to torture" (*crucio*), and that *Crux* and *Crucifer* were terms of opprobrium to the most desperate of villains. To the Hebrews — and be it remembered multitudes of the early Christians were converts from Judaism — the cross was the "accursed tree"; and the terrible words often rang in their ears: "Cursed is every one that hangeth on a tree."[2] Even by the heathen in later days, though they used it so commonly, the cross was called *infelix lignum*, *arbor infelix;* they regarded it as a frightful omen, a thing to be shuddered at, a thing which, as Cicero says, should be kept not only from the sight, but from the very thoughts of all free men.[3]

Hence the doctrine of the cross was to the Jews a stumbling-block, and to the Greeks foolishness.[4] The Jews expressed the lowest depths of their contemptuous

[1] *Extrema pœna*, Apul. *Metam* X.; Paul. *Sent.* v. *tit.* XXI.; *servile supplicium*, Tac. *Hist.* IV. 11.

[2] Deut. xxi. 23, LXX.: ἐπικατάρατος ὁ σταυρούμενος; Gal. iii. 13. The LXX. had the terrible addition, κεκατηραμένος ὑπὸ Θεοῦ, but St. Paul omits those words, which he could not have quoted without a long explanation.

[3] "Nomen ipsum Crucis absit non modo a corpore civium Romanorum, sed etiam a cogitatione, oculis, auribus." — Cic. *pro Rabirio*, 5.

[4] 1 Cor. i. 23; Min. Felix, *Octav.* 9; Tert. *ad Natt.* I. 11.

hatred when they called Christians "worshippers of the Hung."[1] They chose "the Hung" as their bitterest term of opprobrium for Christ. The Gentiles thought that they had overwhelmed Christianity in scornful derision when they described its votaries as "devotees of a crucified malefactor."[2] "*Quales estis*," they asked, "qui *Deum* colitis *crucifixum?*" Augustine, indeed, replies that "the Son of God was crucified not that the cross might disgrace Christ, but that by the sacredness of Christ the cross should become the emblem of victory." But it was not easy to remove an inveterate prejudice.

The Christians, therefore, were in this difficulty: they were not, they could not be, "*ashamed* of the Cross of Christ." They knew it to be "the power of God and the wisdom of God" to all who were in the way of salvation, and only an offence to the perishing. They were ready to glory in the cross, to suffer persecution for the cross, and, at all hazards, to preach "Jesus Christ and Him crucified."[3] On the other hand, the way to win men is not to kindle their sense of abhorrence. A holy wisdom taught the Christians not to scare both Gentiles and Jews from all access to their religion by wilfully insulting their most violent prejudices, or by needlessly forcing upon them a difficulty which, unless rightly approached and understood, was to them practically insuperable. Nor were they in the least bound to do this. The cross did *not* express the whole of Christianity. The doctrine of the Incarnation was one which *included* that of the Crucifixion. Christ, in His attributes of Saviour of the world, was as truly, as fully, as faithfully set forth in the aspect of the Good

[1] אבודי תלוי.

[2] Comp. Jos. *c. Ap.* II. 10. The blasphemous *graffito*, pictured *infra*, p. 94, shews how wise the early Christians were in their reserve. It was found in the *Pædagogium*, or Pages' school, under the Palatine, and is of the second century. See Stockbauer, *Kunstgesch. des Kreuzes*, p. 79.

[3] 1 Cor. i. 18, ii. 2; Gal. v. 11. It is, however, necessary to add the caution that these texts are sometimes misunderstood or thrust into false perspective.

Shepherd as in that of the agonizing sufferer. Either symbol, if taken alone, was incomplete; nor, indeed, can any symbol be all-comprehensive. Man's salvation was not wrought *only* by the *death* of Christ; still less by the sole fact that His death, though brief, was shameful and agonizing. It was wrought by His nativity, by His life, by all His words, and all His works. It was not as the humiliated victim that He was present most consciously or most habitually to the minds of His children in the early centuries. They thought of Him more often as that which He was and ever shall be, — the Son of God who sitteth to make intercession for us at the right hand of the Majesty on High. They did not morbidly meditate upon the three hours during which He hung upon the tree. That scene in man's redemption was over forever. It was one sacrifice, oblation, and satisfaction, offered once for all, full, perfect, sufficient.[1] Christ suffered no more. Their Lord was now enthroned amid endless hallelujahs, as the Lord of time and all the worlds. They wished all men — Jews and Gentiles alike — so to think of Him.

Therefore, while they did not for a moment *omit* the cross from their beliefs, they did not dwell predominantly, still less exclusively, upon it. To all the world except themselves, the horrible gibbet which Roman corruption had introduced from the devilishness of Eastern cruelty was undissociable from "ideas of pain, of guilt, of ignominy." Such associations were the reverse of the joyous, the exultant, the inspiring, the soul-regenerating conceptions which the presence of Christ's Spirit breathed into the hearts and lives of the children of the kingdom. "Crosses," said Minucius Felix, "we neither worship nor desire."

It is true that among themselves, as early as the third century, they constantly used the sign of the cross.[2]

[1] Heb. ix. 7, 8, ὁ Χριστὸς ἅπαξ προσενεχθείς; 1 Pet. iii. 18.

[2] Tert. *De Cor. Mil.* 3. Comp. Chrys. *Hom.* XI. *ad Pop. Antioch*; Jer. *Epp.* XXII. 7, CXXX. 9; Aug. *Serm.* CLXXXI. Comp. Just. Mart. *Apol.* I. 60.

But even in using it they did not connect it with all the erring and harrowing associations which were attached to it by mediæval superstition. They used it as a token of recognition; as a sign of fellowship; as a reminder of the duty of self-denial; as a symbol of consolation in days of persecution; as an encouragement to self-control, to self-dedication at all times. That it did *not* remind them of the Crucifixion only, or even mainly, is proved alike by their literature and their relics. It was to them, as we shall see, a distant, and at first disguised, symbol of the Person of the Lord in its full humanity. It seems to have been to every believer the sign of the New Covenant, and of his personal share in it. The Greek letter *Chi*, which forms a cross (X), was the initial of Christ's name or title. As such, it came to mean, or, rather, to recall, to the Christian mind all the thoughts and associations which the word Christ can awaken. It stood in the place of a portrait-figure as a symbol of the God-man. For a time it was, so to speak, all things to all men. To the first members of the Church it represented their Master, who was all in all to them; and, in that point of view, which is a wider and happier one than any of later days, it represented the whole faith, — the person of Christ, His death for man, and the life and death of man in Christ. The gradual drift of Christian feeling towards special or exclusive contemplation of the Lord's sufferings and death is a matter of ecclesiastical history. The effects which that tendency exercised on Christian emotion, and, therefore, on Christian art, are marked by the transition from the cross to the crucifix.[1]

It may be objected that these are the views of a Protestant writer, but Romanists admit the same. "La croix, imitant la lettre T," says Martigny, — and it must be remembered that T is the earliest form under which the cross appeared at all, — "*était un symbole de vie, de félicité, de salut.*" I would call specially attention to this remark of the learned Roman prelate: the cross was not an object

[1] R. St. J. Tyrrwhitt, *Art Teaching*, pp. 198, 216.

to be contemplated with morbid excitement and hysteric sobs, but was an emblem of salvation, of felicity, of life.

And yet the cross was only introduced among Christian symbols tentatively and timidly. It may be doubted whether it once occurs till after the vision of Constantine in 312, and his accession to the Empire of the East and West in 324.

Crosses were of two kinds.[1] The *Crux Simplex*, "of one single piece without transom," was a mere stake (*palus*), used sometimes to impale, sometimes to hang the victim by the hands.[2]

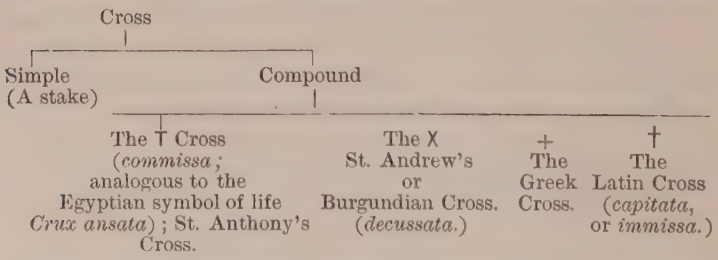
The Compound Cross, *Crux compacta*, was of three various kinds.

i. The *Crux commissa* was a cross in the shape of the letter T, and is called St. Anthony's Cross. A variety of it is the handled cross (*crux ansata*), key of the Nile, or symbol of life, so common on the Egyptian monuments.

ii. The *Crux decussata* is St. Andrew's or the Burgundian Cross. It is in the shape of the Greek letter X. "The letter X," says St. Jerome, "in shape, denotes the cross; in number, Ten."[3]

iii. The *Crux immissa* or *capitata* is the ordinary Latin cross. When the arms are equal, it is called the Greek

[1] The following tabular illustration may make the text more clear: —


Cross
Simple (A stake)
Compound
The T Cross (*commissa*; analogous to the Egyptian symbol of life *Crux ansata*); St. Anthony's Cross.
The X St. Andrew's or Burgundian Cross. (*decussata.*)
The Greek Cross.
The Latin Cross (*capitata*, or *immissa.*)

For much curious information about these crosses, for which there is no space here, see my article on "Cross," "Crucifixion," in Smith's *Dict. of the Bible*. For a description of the cross on the Labarum of Constantine, see Euseb. *Vit. Const.* I. 31.

[2] See Tert. *Apol.* 16.

[3] Jer. *in Jer.* xxxi.

cross.[1] When it has a second transom, the upper one is intended to represent the plank over the head (*titulus*) on which the accusation was written.

(i.) The first cross which appears on the monuments — though not till the end of the second century at the earliest — is the T cross (*commissa* or *patibulata*), and even that occurs but rarely. It is found thus *Ire* T *ne* on a third century tomb in the cemetery of St. Callistus. The Greek cross is found, as a sort of full stop, on the tomb of Ruffina in the crypt of St. Lucina.[2]

This form of the cross excited no animosity either in Jews or Pagans. As regards the Jews, they would not have been alienated by a sign which is directly sanctioned in the Prophet Ezekiel. In Ezek. ix. 4, Jehovah bids a cherub go and set a *cross* (Heb. תָּו) on the foreheads of those that mourn for Israel's sins, and all except those who bear this T cross are to be slain. On this St. Jerome remarks, "The Greek letter *thau* and our T is a species of cross."[3]

The Pagans would merely regard it as a form of the "handled cross," the well-known Egyptian symbol of life. It may therefore be regarded as an emblem anticipatory and directly prophetic, handed down from earliest times.

[1] Δόρυ τετράπλευρον. — Nonnus. On its mystic significance, see Iren. *Hær.* ii. 24, Aug. *in Ps.* ciii.

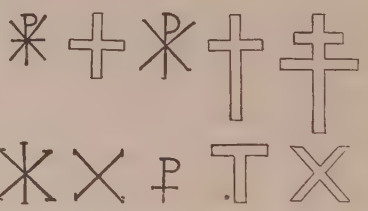
[2] Some of the most ancient basilicas were built in this shape. Boldetti reckons as the first cross one on a tomb of A.D. 370. See Paulinus *Ep.* XXIV. 23.

[3] See *supra*, § 1. Comp. Job xxxi. 35 : "Lo, here is my *signature*." (Heb. *Thau.*) Augustine here asks (*Tract.* 118 in Job) : "Quid est signum Christi nisi crux Christi?" On old Phœnician coins the *t*, the last letter of the Hebrew alphabet, is T (Gesen. *Num. Phœn.* 47). Ruffinus says that it was used as one of the Egyptian hieratic letters, and the same symbol has been found in other nations. In Rev. vii. 3, the seal on the forehead is not the cross, but the name of God. Comp. xiv. 1. The T cross may be seen on the breast of an Egyptian mummy in the museum of the London University ; in the ruined cities of Mexico and Nicaragua ; in Kamschatka ; at Babylon ; at Khorsabad ; in the South Pacific, etc. See *Edinb. Rev.*, April, 1876, "The Præchristian Cross."

(ii.) The *Latin* Cross is not *certainly* known to occur before it is found on the tomb of the Empress Galla Placidia at Ravenna in A.D. 451.

Egyptian *Crux ansata.*

(iii.) The *Crux decussata*, or St. Andrew's Cross (X), is found earlier than this; but may be meant only for the first letter of the name of Christ. It easily passes into the monogram ⁎, which stood for Iesus Xristus; and so into the well-known later monogram (☧ ☧), which Constantine placed on his Labarum after his vision. Then "the towering eagles resigned the flags into the cross,"[1] and "the tree of cursing and shame sat upon the foreheads of kings."[2] The objections to prominent representation of the cross diminished as the punishment grew rare. Crucifixion was finally abolished forever by Constantine.[3] The form of the monogram which resembles the handled cross (☧) did not become common till the fifth century. It first appears in 364 on the sceptre of Valentinian I. and the coins of Valentinian III. It has been supposed that the letter P (the Greek *Rho*)



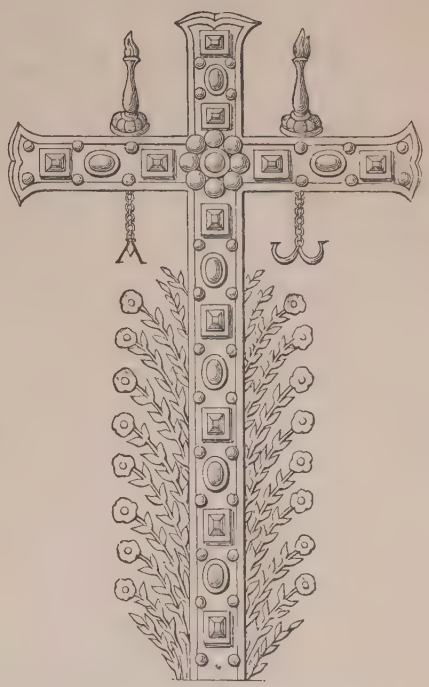
The Labarum on a coin of Constantine.

[1] Bishop Pearson, *On the Creed.* "Regum purpuras et ardentes diadematum gemmas patibuli Salvatoris pictura condecorat."—Jer. *Ep. ad Laetam.*

[2] Bishop Jeremy Taylor.

[3] Sozom. I. 8.

was not only used in this monogram as the second letter in the name of Christ, but that it was also a symbol of the idea of "Help," because, by the Greek method of *isopsephism*, and the Jewish *Gematria*, the numerical values of the separate letters of the Greek word *βοήθεια*, "help," = 100, and the letter P also stands for 100. I have not been able to trace any authority for this view, and probably in any case it was only an afterthought. But even the Latin cross, pure and simple, was always regarded, not as an object of gloom, mortification, and horror, but of peace and exultation; not as the symbol of shame and spitting, but of life and triumph. Instances of it in the fifth century are united with joyous emblems, and the cross in the cemetery of St. Pontianus blossoms into flowers and foliage of gold and silver, and is enriched with gems. So sings St. Paulinus of Nola: —



From the catacomb of St. Pontianus. Eighth century.

> "Ardua floriferae crux cingitur orbe coronae
> Et Domini fuso tincta cruore rubet;"

and Prudentius: —

> "Crucem corona lucido cingit globo."

So sings St. Fortunatus in the hymn "Vexilla regis prodeunt": —

"Arbor decora et fulgida
Ornata regis purpura."

And this sentiment is still echoed and translated in modern hymns: —

"Faithful cross above all others,
One and only noble tree,
None in foliage, none in blossom,
None in fruit, thy peer may be."

(iv.) The cross probably lurked, in a somewhat disguised form, under the figures known as Gammadias, or crossed Gammas[1] (卐 卍), as the ornament of dresses, late in the third century. This cross (called *croix pattée*, *Pfötchenkreuz*) is found on the mantle of the Good Shepherd, and also on the robes of Christians. They may be seen on the dress of the humble *fossor* (sexton) Diogenes, in the cemetery of Domitilla, whose sweet and peaceful face has often been admired. He is introduced as an imaginary actor in Cardinal Wiseman's little story of Fabiola. In this form the cross is curiously identical with the Buddhist *Swastika*, — the two pieces of wood rubbed together to produce fire, — which was the sign of life.[2]

"It would be difficult," says Dr. Maitland, "to find a more complete revolution of feeling among mankind, than that which has taken place concerning the instrument of crucifixion." But nothing can now rob the cross of the dignity which has gathered round it. In the change, however, from the cross to the crucifix, of which we shall speak hereafter, "the original intention of the symbol was entirely lost. From being a token of joy, an object worthy to be crowned with flowers, a sign in which to conquer, it

[1] Gamma (Γ) is the Greek capital G.

[2] Much curious information about these Pagan analogies may be found in Dr. Lundy's *Monumental Christianity*, New York, 1876.

became a thing of tears and agony, a stock subject with the artist desiring to display his power of representing anguish."[1]

(*iii.*) Indirect Pagan Types.

In an early stage of Christian Art Christ was represented indirectly by symbols derived from Paganism. The predominance of purely decorative Pagan analogies is specially noticeable in the Catacomb of St. Januarius at Naples.[2]

This was, no doubt, partly due to the fact that the early Christian painters who decorated the Catacombs were hardly able at once to revolutionize the types of art with which they had been familiar for centuries. "Un art ne s'improvise pas," says M. Raoul Rochette. "Early Christian art," says Professor Woltmann, "does not differ in its beginnings from the art of antiquity." Christians had to baptize, as it were, all that could be baptized of the ancient heathen types. They had themselves been Pagans, and were unaccustomed to any but Pagan decorations, into which they infused a new spirit. This they rejoiced to do, since it indicated their conviction that all which was beautiful and true in the ancient legends found its fulfilment in Christ, and was but a symbol of His life and work. In times of peril and persecution there was a distinct advantage in the use of symbols which (*φωνᾶντα συνετοῖσιν*) were full of divine significance to Christians, while they did not arouse the fury and disgust of the countless heathen.[3] The Christians, with large-hearted wisdom, regarded the noblest mythic conceptions as "parhelia of Christianity," and "unconscious prophecies of heathen-

[1] Maitland, *Ch. of the Catacombs*, 162; Milman's *Hist. of Latin Christianity*, III. 515; *Bampton Lectures*, 279.

[2] See Schulze, *Die Katakomben von San Gennaro*, Jena, 1877.

[3] See Perret, *Catacombes de Rome*, VI. 35.

dom," as they are called by Archbishop Trench.[1] Orpheus and the Sibyls were regarded as prophets of Christ.[2]

Of these types of Christ, borrowed from Pagan antiquity, the favourite was Orpheus taming the wild beasts with his lyre. Two specimens are found in the Catacomb of St. Callistus, and Boldetti even imagined that they might be as old as the days of Nero.[3] Orpheus is represented in the bloom of youth, clad in a chlamys and anaxyrides, with a Phrygian cap, supporting on his knee his five-stringed harp. Around him lion, and wolf, and leopard, and horse, and sheep, and serpent, and tortoise are listening; and on the branches

[1] See Lactant. *Instt.* I. 5. 4. Orpheus, like Christ, died a violent death, and had descended to the shades below. "Orpheus, Musaeus Linus, deos coluerunt, non pro Diis culti sunt." — Aug. *Civ. Dei*, XVIII. 14. The remarks of Clement of Alexandria on this type in his *Protreptikon* are very interesting. "Not such," he says, "is my singer. Orpheus tamed beasts, Christ tamed men: birds, *i.e.* the frivolous; serpents, *i.e.* the deceivers; lions, *i.e.* the furious; swine, *i.e.* the lustful; wolves, *i.e.* the avaricious; stones and trees, *i.e.* the unintelligent." See De Rossi, II. 357.

[2] Aug. *c. Faust.* XVII. 15. These Pagan symbols naturally did not last for many centuries. They are found chiefly in the ancient crypts of Lucina, Domitilla, Priscilla, and Prætextatus. As regards the woodcuts, it may be remarked that the few frescoes which remain unremoved and unobliterated in the open part of the Catacombs may be, perhaps, better judged of by those who have not seen them from Mr. Parker's photographs, or from the original sketches in Maitland, than from Aringhi's elaborate copper plates, or the splendid fantasies of Perret's sumptuous volumes.

[3] Boldetti, *Cimiteri*, Rome, 1720. Specimens of Christ as Orpheus are given by Bosio, 255; Aringhi, I. 563; Garrucci, *Pitture*, tavv. 30, etc.; Bottari, VII., LXIII., etc.

of the tree are seated peacocks and other birds.[1] That gracious and beautiful figure subduing the savage passions of the animals, and drawing all to listen to him with sweet attractiveness, appeared to the ancient Christians a most fit emblem of Christ drawing order out of confusion and gentleness out of ferocity. It recalled also the Messianic prophecies about the day when "the wolf also shall dwell with the lamb, and the leopard shall lie down with the kid; and the calf and the young lion and the fatling together; and a little child shall lead them."[2]

It must not be supposed for a moment that there was not an unfathomable gulf between Pagan and Christian Art, even when they used the same symbols. "Pompeii," says Perret, "shews the worship of form, the adoration of matter, the marvels of grace and physical perfection. The Catacombs set forth the life of the soul, love, modesty, and prayer."[3]

There was another reason why the symbol of Orpheus was so dear to the early Christians. Joy and the blithe serenity, which viewed death with no alarm or self-abasement, were their marked characteristics. St. Luke throws a flood of light on the tone of their society — "drunken, but not with wine," intoxicated, so to speak, with the rushing influences of Pentecost — when he says that "they did take their food with exultation (*ἀγαλλίασις*) and singleness (*ἀφελότης*) of heart." The words indicate their bounding gladness, their simplicity and smoothness of feeling, "as of a plain without stones or a field without furrows."[4]

[1] See Jerome (*in Matt.* xxi.), where he argues for the human beauty of Christ from the look of genius and inspiration ascribed by Philostratus to Orpheus. "Igneum quiddam et sidereum radiabat oculis ejus, et divinitatis majestas lucebat ex facie."

Martigny also refers to Origen (*Hom.* XX. *in Matt.* xxix.); Euseb. *De Laud. Constant*, XIV.; Greg. Nyss. *Hexaem.* 7; Lactant. *Instt.* VII. 24.

[2] Isa. xi. 6, lxv. 25. The symbol disappears in the third century, perhaps because it was multiplied in later Pagan art.

[3] Perret, *Catacombes de Rome*, VI. 35.

[4] Acts ii. 46. Dean Stanley says of the Catacombs: "Everything is

A joy passing the joy of harvest was a priceless possession of which they alone held the secret; and what seemed passing strange to the ancient world was their divine paradox of gladness in the midst of anguish. They were "in much affliction with joy of the Holy Ghost." [1]

When St. Paul wrote those words in his earliest extant epistle, he wrote of a new power in the world. For the early Christians neither life nor death had any terror. Their view of death is expressed in the prayer of the Alexandrian liturgy, "Assemble them (the dead), O Lord, in green pastures, beside the still waters, in the paradise of joy, whence grief, and sadness, and groans are banished." Read the poems of Ovid in his exile. Read the letters of Cicero and of Seneca in theirs. Then read the letter which St. Paul wrote to the Philippians from his gloomy prison and abounding anguish, and contrast the hopeless, pusillanimous wailing of the Pagan poet and the wealthy philosophers with St. Paul's jubilant cry, which he fears will even weary his converts by its reiteration, "Rejoice in the Lord always; again I will say rejoice." Compare the Rome of gilded palaces, where men clutched at the possibility of suicide as the main resource and hope in life, with the bright, gleeful faces and sunny emblems of inextinguishable happiness scrawled in the damp galleries of the Catacombs. Compare the agony and defiance of Pagan epitaphs, like that of Procope, "I, Procope, lift up my hands against the gods who took me hence undeserving," with the glad cry of the Christian over his dead wife, "*Terentiana lives*," or, "Agape, thou shalt live forever." Compare the hopelessness of the bereaved Pagan father,

cheerful and joyous. There is neither the cross of the fifth and sixth centuries; nor the crucifix or crucifixion of the twelfth or thirteenth; nor the tortures and martyrdoms of the seventeenth; nor the skeletons of the fifteenth; nor the cypresses and death's-heads of the eighteenth. There are instead wreaths of roses, winged genii, children playing." — *Christian Instt.* 251.

[1] Acts v. 41; 1 Thess. i. 6.

"*Our hope was in our boy; now all is ashes and lamentation*," or (on the tomb of a child of five), "To the unrighteous gods, who robbed me of my life," with the cheerful resignation of the Christian father, "Marcus, innocent boy, thou art now among the innocent." In the Catacombs will not be found one note of scorn or defiance, such as we find in the heathen epitaphs, "*Here it is; so it is; nothing else could be*"; or "Hold all a mockery, reader; nothing is our own"; or the common one, —

> "Decipimur fatis, et tempore fallimur, et mors
> Deridet curas; anxia vita nihil."

Few facts are more striking in the history of early Christianity than that its records are so largely borrowed from the dark, subterranean places, where martyrs were buried, and the persecuted took refuge, yet that all their emblems were emblems of gladness, — the green leaf, the palm branch, the vine with its purple clusters, the peacocks, the dolphin, the phœnix, the winged genii, the lamb, the dove, the flower. "There is no sign of mourning, no token of resentment, no expression of vengeance," says Dean Milman; "all breathes softness, benevolence, charity." So serene is the resignation of the Christian survivors that even *dolens*, "grieving," — the mildest expression of sorrow, — is found but rarely; and *infelix*, "luckless," occurs but once.[1]

Cupid and Psyche. Catacomb of St. Domitilla.

No Pagan symbol, therefore, better accorded with their tone of mind than that which repre-

[1] Milman, *History of Latin Christianity*, III. 402; Hemans, *Ancient Christianity*, 46; Burgon, *Letters from Rome*, 199, 211; Lundy, *Monumental Christianity*, 39.

sented the youthful Orpheus bending the listening trees and charming the savage lions by his celestial harmonies. It indicated Christ as the King of Love and Peace, as the Law of life, and the Harmony of the world.

Other Pagan symbols adopted by Christianity were those of the winged Psyche, the Sirens, and Hercules feeding the dragon with poppy seed. The story of Cupid and Psyche, of which there are several instances, was chosen as the emblem of God's love for the soul.

(*iv.*) Christ Represented under Old Testament Types.

1 Cor. x. 6: *ταῦτα δὲ τύποι ἡμῶν ἐγένοντο.*
1 Cor. x. 11: *πάντα τύποι συνέβαινον.*

"Novum Testamentum in Vetere latet." — Aug.

"Lex nova, res; antiqua, typus: diffusior illa,
Haec brevior: retegit ista quod illa tegit."
— Adam de S. Victore, *De laud. S. Scripturae.*

Christian Art went a step further when it presented Christ or His work typically, by Old Testament scenes in which He was prefigured. These explain themselves, and we need not dwell upon them here.[1] The subjects, as Mommsen says, are handled very freely, and, according to circumstances, vary in minor details from the Biblical tradition.[2]

Catacomb of St. Marcellinus.

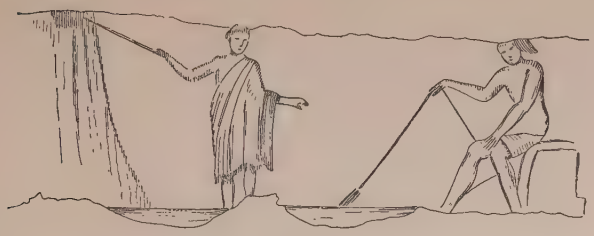
The five commonest are: —

i. Moses striking the Rock, as a type of Christ giving the Living Water; and (less often) Moses taking the shoes off his feet.[3]

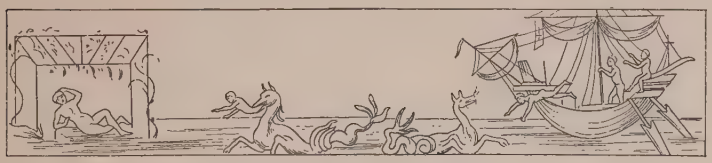
[1] See Garrucci, *Storia*, I. Book V. *Dell' Antico Testamento.*

[2] Mommsen, *The Catacombs*, *Cont. Rev.*, July, 1871, p. 175.

[3] The woodcuts are from the cemeteries of St. Marcellinus and St. Callistus.



ii. The History of Jonah. The four stages of his history are often set forth together as on the accompanying gem. He was especially a type of Christ's Resurrection, and St. Augustine says that these pictures of him were a common topic of Pagan derision.[1] There are many



From the catacomb of St. Lucina.

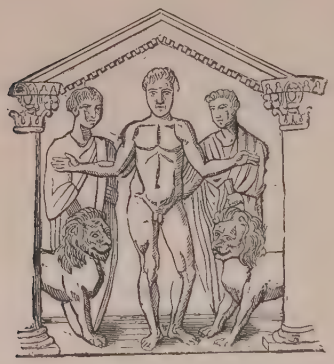
reasons why the type of Jonah was so frequently repeated by ancient Christian Art. The story recalled our Lord's direct allusion to Jonah's preaching (Matt. xii. 39; Luke xi. 29); and the prophet's deliverance was a natural emblem of the Resurrection. "Christ," says St. Augustine, "passed from the wood of the cross, as Jonah from the ship to the whale (or the power of death); the endangered crew are the human race, battered by the tempests of the world; and as Jonah preached to Nineveh after his return to life, so the Gentile Church only heard the Lord's word after the Resurrection."[2] The fish in these pictures is represented

Fourth century gem.

[1] Aug. *Hom.* VI. *De Jona :* "Multo cachinno a paganis graviter irrisum animadverti," 73.

[2] *Ep. ad Deo-Gratias.* Qu. VI. *De Jona.*

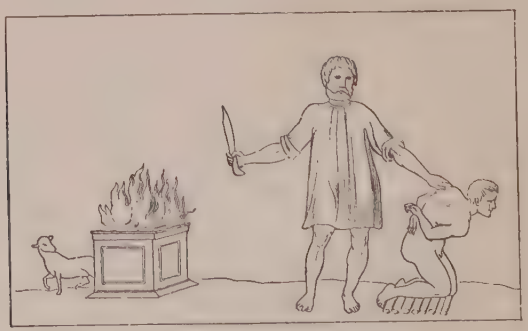
as a sort of monster (Heb. *dag gadôl*, sometimes described in Greek as *θὴρ ἐνάλιος*). In the representations of the "gourd" (Heb. *qiqaion*, LXX. *κολοκύνθη*, in old Latin versions called *cycurbita*) the fruit is always prominent; but in later representations it has ivy-shaped leaves, as though in concession to Jerome's novel rendering of "ivy" (*hedera*). The representation of this scene seems to recall the folly of resisting the will of God.



From the sarcophagus of Junius Bassus.

iii. Daniel in the Lions' Den. He is usually represented standing naked between two lions, a type of the victory of Innocence. But since Christian Art, as a rule, avoided the nude, the fact that Daniel is almost always represented undraped shews that he was made a type of Christ's Resurrection, and of the Christian soul delivered from the two lions of sin and death.

iv. The Sacrifice of Abraham.



From the catacomb of St. Marcellinus.

v. The Three Children in the Furnace. It may be imagined that this type would be full of consolation to

those who had seen their brethren wrapped in the hideous pitchy tunic, and burning as living torches in the gardens of Nero.

From the catacomb of Domitilla.

(*v.*) Christ Represented by New Testament Allusions.

The Good Shepherd.

"τὸ ἀπολωλὸς πρόβατον ἐγώ εἰμι· ἀνακάλεσόν με Σωτέρ, καὶ σῶσον μέ." — Greek Funeral Office.

"Bone pastor, panis vere,
Jesu nostri miserere;
Tu nos pasce, nos tuere,
Tu nos bona fac videre." — St. Thom. Aquin.

"Die symbolischen Darstellungen christlicher Malerei . . . von den einfachsten Motiven ausging, und sich bis zur Christusgestalt erhob, der als der gute Hirt Lamm auf den Schultern tragend erscheint." — Mollin, *Die Kunst.*, p. 141.

A still nearer step to the direct representation of Christ, though chronologically earlier, is taken when the picture is directly allusive.

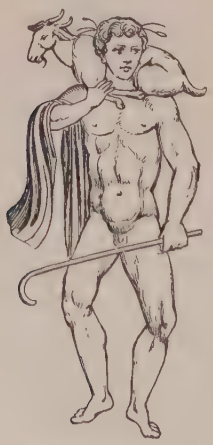
Of this advance, the simplest, the most beloved, the most ancient, and the most universal specimens are those which represent Christ as the Good Shepherd, with direct reference to many passages of Scripture, and especially to the discourse in the tenth chapter of St. John, and the Parable of the Lost Sheep recorded by St. Luke.[1]

[1] John x. 14; Luke xv. Comp. Isa. xl. 11; Jer. xxxi. 10; Ezek. xxxiv. 11; Ps. xxiii. "Erroneam ovem patentia pastoris requirit et invenit. Nam impatientia facile unam contemneret; sed laborem inquisitionis patientia suscepit, et humeris insuper advehit bajulus patiens peccatricem derelictam." — Tert. *De patient.* 12.

This is the favourite and most touching figure in the Catacombs. It seems to inspire the simple Christian painters with delightful skill. The best-loved book among the early Christians — a book so popular that it was even read as Scripture in the churches — is the *Shepherd of Hermas*. It has been called *The Pilgrim's Progress* of the second century. Clement of Alexandria calls Christ "the shepherd of royal," "of rational sheep." St. Abercius, on his tomb, says: —

> "I, Abercius, am a disciple of the Pure Shepherd
> Who feeds His flocks and sheep on the mountains and the plains,
> Who has great eyes that look on all sides."

Even in the days of Tertullian this emblem was commonly painted on glasses and vases, and it has been found not only at Rome but in Africa and Gaul. It was, says Martigny, a sort of Material Homily, presenting to the mind of the Christian the blessings of the Incarnation and the Saviour's pity.



From the tomb of the Nasones.

Statue of the Good Shepherd. Lateran Museum. Fourth century.

The type had this further advantage for the poor and little-instructed artists, that, while it was intensely Chris-

tian, it enabled them to borrow from heathen models. If the *idea* was taken from the Gospels, the analogue was found in Pagan monuments. To the eyes of a Greek or Roman the figure of the Good Shepherd differed but little from that of Apollo Nomios or Aristeus, Apollo feeding the flocks of Admetus; or from the celebrated statue of Hermes Kriophoros (the ram-bearer) at Tanagra.[1] It also recalled in some instances the figure of Orpheus. This will be seen from the accompanying woodcuts. But how different was the meaning of the allegoric figure to the eye of the Christian, breathing as it did the idea of divine and unspeakable compassion! The figure was usually the *central* one on walls and ceilings, but it was never heartily adopted in the Eastern Church, and though used by Constantine, died away amid the complications and artificialities of the fourth century.

Apollo Aristeus. Second century.

Good Shepherd with a kid, between sheep and goat, and two olives.

Christ was to the early Christians pre-eminently the Good Shepherd, or rather the Fair Shepherd. The adjective in the Gospels is not *ἀγαθὸς*, "good," but *καλὸς*, "beautiful."[2] It implies that Innocence and Tenderness were translucent through human beauty.

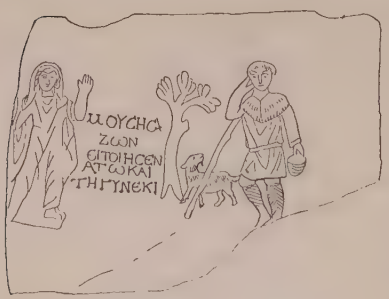
[1] See Piper, *Myth. u. Symb. d. Christ. Kunst.*, I. 77.

[2] John x. 11, 14, *ὁ ποιμὴν ὁ καλὸς*.

No one has written more appreciatively respecting this symbol than Dean Stanley.[1] It appealed to all his warmest sympathies. "What," he asks, "is the test or sign of

Early Christian gems.

Christian popular belief, which in these earliest representations of Christianity is handed down to us as the most cherished, the all-sufficing, token of their creed? It is very simple, but it contains a great deal. It is a shepherd in the bloom of youth, with the crook, or a shepherd's pipe, in one hand, and on his shoulder a lamb, which he carefully carries, and holds with the other hand.[2] We see at once who it is; we all know without being told. This, in that earliest chamber, or church of a Christian family,[3] is the only sign of Christian life and Christian belief. But, as it is almost the only sign of Christian belief in this earliest catacomb, so it continues always the chief, always the prevailing sign, as



[1] *Christian Institutions*, pp. 253 ff. (abbreviated).

[2] Perret (*Catacombes*, VI. 58) thus describes the beautiful picture which he copies in his plate xxv.: "La brébis egarée va rentrer au bercail et le bon Pasteur la retient encore sur ses épaules; il semble qu'il ne puisse se décharger de ce doux fardeau."

[3] The Catacomb of St. Priscilla.

long as those burial-places were used." After alluding to the almost total neglect of this lovely symbol by the Fathers and Theologians, he says that it answers the question, What was the popular religion of the first Christians? "It was, in one word, the Religion of the Good Shepherd. The kindness, the courage, the love, the beauty, the grace, of the Good Shepherd, was to them, if we may so say, Prayer Book and Articles, Creed and Canons, all in one. They looked on that Figure, and it conveyed to them all they wanted. As ages passed on, the Good Shepherd faded from the mind of the Christian world, and other emblems of the Christian faith have taken His place. Instead of the gracious and gentle Pastor, there came the Omnipotent Judge, or the Crucified Sufferer, or the Infant in His Mother's arms, or the Master in His Parting Supper, or the figures of innumerable saints and angels, or the elaborate expositions of the various forms of theological controversy." But "the Good Shepherd represents to us the joyful, cheerful side of Christianity of which we spoke before. Look at that beautiful, graceful Figure, bounding down as if from His native hills, with the happy sheep nestling on His shoulder, with the pastoral pipes in His hand, blooming in immortal youth. . . . That is the primitive conception of the Founder of Christianity in those earlier centuries when the first object of the Christian community was not to repel, but to include; not to condemn, but to save. The popular conception of Christ in the early Church was of the strong, the joyous youth, of eternal growth, of immortal grace."

We willingly linger over this loving symbol, and will rapidly mention some of the slight variations with which it is presented.

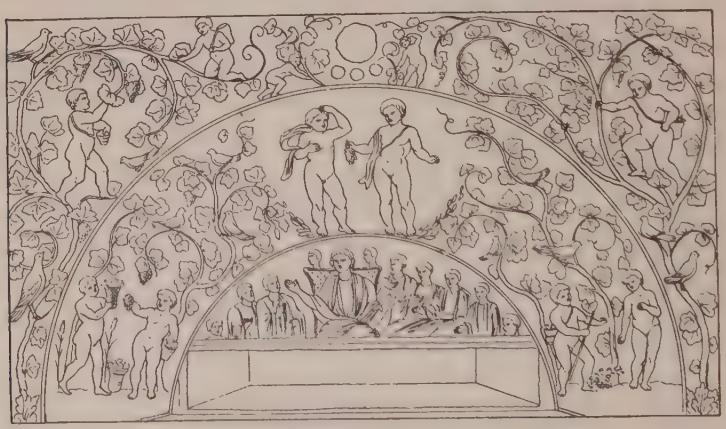
The Good Shepherd is constantly surrounded by the Seasons. The Seasons were a Pagan symbol into which the Christians infused the thought of the Resurrection. "This whole rolling order of things," says Tertullian,[1]

[1] *De Resurrect.* XII. The Pagan four seasons are found on the tomb

"bears witness to the Resurrection of the dead." Spring as a boy gathers roses; Summer presents her fruits;

Good Shepherd and the Seasons. From Catacomb of St. Callistus.

Autumn reaps the ripened ears; Winter as an old man burns the leaves. The Good Shepherd cares for His sheep all the year round.



From Catacomb of St. Callistus.

He is often surrounded by vines with their purple clusters which child-genii pluck, as in the accompanying design which Agincourt refers to the second century. The allu-

of the Nasones. For the following paragraphs, see Martigny, s.v. *Bon Pasteur;* Didron, *Icon.*, pp. 344–348.

sion is to John xv. 5, and illustrates the joyously exultant spirit of early Christianity.

Sometimes the Shepherd stands in the attitude of an Orante between a sheep and a goat, who listen to Him with bowed heads. He is almost invariably boyish and beardless, to indicate an immortality of eternal youth. His hair is short, His eye full of tenderness. He is clad in a short tunic girded round His loins, and sometimes also under His arms, sometimes adorned with *gammadias* (as in the Catacomb at Naples)[1] and with flower-shaped ornaments (*calliculæ*),[2] or with bands of purple. Over this tunic He sometimes wears a mantle (*sagum*) or a coat of skin (*scortea*). His head is almost invariably uncovered. In His left hand He carries His shepherd's crook (*pedum*) to guide or to recover; and in His right hand the milk-pail (*mulctra*), the type, as in the Vision of St. Perpetua, of Holy Com-

Good Shepherd, with mulctra and pedum. Catacomb of Lucina.

Good Shepherd, with syrinx, sheep, and goats. Catacomb of SS. Peter and Marcellinus.

[1] See Schulze, *Die Katak. von San Gennaro*, Jena, 1877.

[2] Bottari, tav. lxxvi. Greek τροχάδες.

munion. He generally holds, or has near at hand, the syrinx, or pastoral flute, with which He plays to His flock. Sometimes He has His hand on His cheek in a gesture of sorrow as He sets forth to recover His lost and wandering sheep.

Sometimes He holds by a cord the watch-dog who is to aid Him in the search.

Sometimes He sits down in weariness, — "*quaerens me sedisti lassus*," — while His dog looks up at Him with sympathy.

But most often He is carrying the recovered sheep upon His shoulders, and standing between two olive-trees, types of peace and fruitfulness and joy. Generally He holds the recovered sheep by its four legs, with one, or with both hands, as though He still fears that it may escape; but sometimes it simply nestles affectionately on His shoulder, happy to be safe, and not dreaming of further wanderings in the desert.

Sometimes He is drawing near the Shepherd's hut and fold (*tugurium*), where the unwandered sheep await Him with solicitude.

Sometimes a number of the flock — or at least two, as representatives — draw near, and caress Him to express their joy at the recovery of their lost brother.

If these varieties are mainly drawn from Luke xv. 1–7, there are others which refer more directly to John x. 1–18, and their antiquity shews how early the Gospel was known throughout the Church.

Sometimes He seems to call His sheep by name, and He conducts them — or all that will listen, for some are grazing, and do not attend to his call — to green pastures and still waters.

Sometimes in an attitude of peace He gazes at them as they feed around Him; or He charms them with the notes of His pipe of reeds.

Sometimes He is blessing and fondling them as they climb the slopes of a steep hill.

On a sarcophagus, in the Lateran, the sheep are feeding on the round bread-cakes called in Italy *ciambelle*.[1] These are an allusion to the Eucharist as the "bread of life"; and to shew their connexion with the Tree of Life, one is placed on the top of a palm-tree at the side. In the Cathedral at Ravenna Christ is seated between two disciples, who present to Him two of these breads on a *corporal*, and beyond are two palm-trees.[2]

From the earliest days it has been noticed as an interesting circumstance that the Fair Shepherd often carries a *kid* on His shoulders, and not a lamb.[3] Lord Lindsay sees in this circumstance an allusion to the scapegoat,[4] but this seems to me wholly improbable, nor is it supported by a single ancient allusion. There is much to be said for the interpretation adopted by Mr. Matthew Arnold in his exquisite sonnet — which regards the kid as indicating the large divine compassion, against which Tertullian so fiercely protested.[5]

> "'He saves the sheep, the goats he doth not save.'
> So spake the fierce Tertullian; but she sigh'd —
> The infant Church! Of love she felt the tide
> Stream on her from her Lord's yet recent grave.
> And then she smiled; and in the catacombs,
> On those walls subterranean, where she hid
> Her head 'mid ignominy, death, and tombs,

---

[1] *Panes rotulares*, *coronae*, *oblates*.

[2] See Barlow, *Symbolism*, p. 77.

[3] See the picture in Aringhi, II. 33. On the vault of a chapel in the Catacomb of SS. Peter and Marcellinus, there are at the corners four bounding kids (Perret, I. 66, V. Pl. lxi.). The specimen on p. 39 is from the Catacomb of SS. Thrason and Saturninus. Comp. Bottari, tavv. lxxviii., clxxix. The latter, from the cemetery of St. Priscilla, is perhaps the earliest existing.

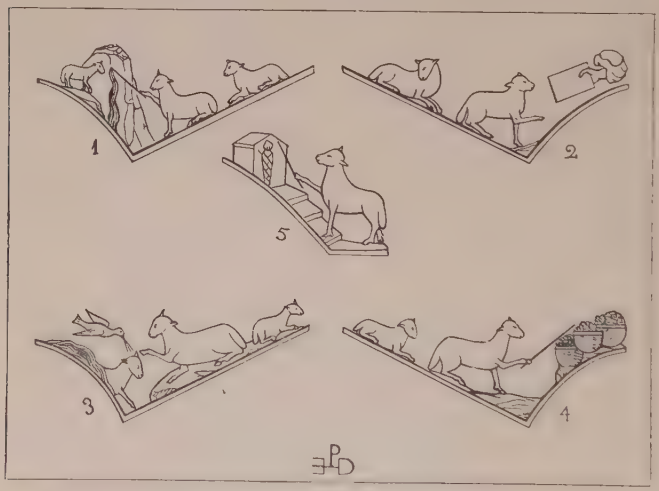
[4] The scapegoat is rare, till a late period, among Christian symbols. It is found on a glass (Buonarotti, *Vetri antichi*, tav. ii.; Perret, IV. Pl. xxviii.).

[5] Tert. *De Pudicit.* 10. "Suis non ethnicis sinum subjecit." Fiercely objecting to *The Shepherd of Hermas*, which he calls "the writing of a shepherd who only loves adulterers," he alludes to the Good Shepherd painted at the bottom of chalices. See *Dict. of Christ. Antiq.* I. 732.

With eye suffused, but heart inspired true,
She her Good Shepherd's hasty image drew,
And on his shoulders not a lamb, a kid." [1]

The one thought of Christians, as they gazed on this glorious figure, would be "Erravi sicut ovis perdita: quaere servum tuum, quoniam mandata tua non sum oblitus." [2]

The lamb, as St. Hilary says,[3] though single, signifies humanity in general. Sometimes, in these pictures, the



From sarcophagus of Junius Bassus.

sheep look up on either side at the Good Shepherd; sometimes they seem indifferent to His voice. Sometimes, as

[1] "Il arrive même que l'agneau soit remplacé par un bouc que le Bon Pasteur porte ou caresse, formel démenti infligé par les peintres à la rigueur des hérétiques montanistes et novatiens, qui refusaient d'admettre tous les pécheurs à la pénitence." — Pératé, *Arch. Chrét.* 87. See, too, Aringhi, *Roma Sotterranea*, II. 292, § 9, who quotes the excellent remarks of Theodoret on Canticles (cap. i.) and of Gregory of Nyssa (Hom. 2, *in Cant.* ii.). In the spandrils of the sarcophagus of Junius Bassus, the Lamb (as Christ) will be seen striking the Rock, baptizing, raising Lazarus with a wand, etc.

[2] Ps. cxix. 176.

[3] *In Matt.* xviii. 12.

in the catacomb of St. Domitilla, we have a bounding lamb, with the pastoral staff and milk-pail, — an emblem of divine nurture, — which the Good Shepherd frequently carries in His hand. The crowned victorious lamb on Mount Zion is a favourite symbol of the fifth century mosaics, and appears on the sarcophagus of Galla Placidia at Ravenna (A.D., 451) and on a gilt glass here reproduced. The lamb recalled some of the most remarkable passages in both Testaments.[1] This symbolic figure continued so popular as almost to supersede any other representation of Christ. Didron thinks that this was the reason why it was prohibited by the Quinisext Council under Justinian II., in 692. But even this prohibition did not prevent the repetition of the lamb, although it rendered actual pictures of Christ more common.

Tomb of Galla Placidia.

From a glass cup.

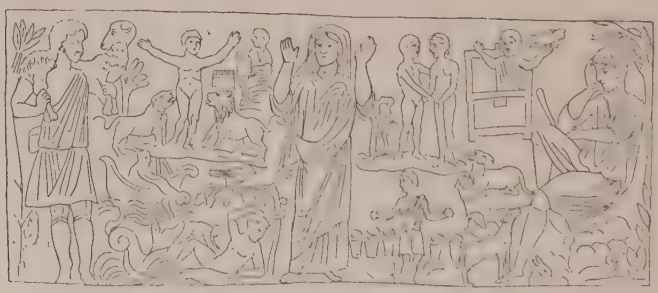
Before leaving this part of the subject we may call attention to the woodcuts on p. 48, which represent combinations of the rich

[1] Gen. iv. 4; xxii. 8; xvi. 1; 1 Pet. i. 19, etc.

series of elementary symbols which form the alphabet of Christianity, "the mystic phrase of which each sign is a word." The first is from a gem of the second century, in the Kircher Museum, and combines the Fair Shepherd, lamb, dove, green leaf, Tau cross, anchor, and fishes, with the word ΙΧΘΥC. The other is on a fourth century sarcophagus at Velletri, and combines the Fair Shepherd, Daniel, an Orante, Adam and Eve, Noah, Jonah, the multiplication of the loaves, and again the Fair Shepherd among the sheep and goats.

Second century gem.

One of the modern instances of the lamb symbolically used to indicate Christ as the Redeemer of the World, is in the magnificent altar piece of San Bavo, in Ghent, by the brothers Van Eyck (1432).[1] In the centre of a lovely and blooming



Fourth century sarcophagus at Velletri.

landscape is an altar on which stands the victim Lamb. From its pierced side the blood of the new Covenant is flowing into a chalice. On either side are angels, who

[1] The picture is reproduced in Dohme's Series, *Die Brüder Van Eyck*, p. 5, and in Woltmann, II. 4, and fully described in Schnaas, *Gesch. d. Bild. Künste*, VIII. 120–132.

carry the cross, the pillar, the spear, the sponge, and hyssop-stalk. The altar is encircled by a choir of singing angels, and two of them, kneeling in front of it, swing their thuribles of incense. Nearer the spectator is a streaming fountain of the water of life, on either side of which kneel multitudes of the redeemed. On the right are popes, bishops, priests, and monks, over whom, closer to the altar, are a throng of virgins and martyrs, with their victorious palms: —

"Nearest the domes and tourelles, where sapphire is mingled with jasper,
Gather in one, truer lilies themselves in the midst of the lilies."

On the left are princes, nobles, and burghers, and over them cardinals and bishops who have been martyrs and confessors. In the distance is the city of Jerusalem, and over the altar is the Holy Dove, from which stream rays of light on every side. This glorious picture, one of the great pictures of the world, shews what the Van Eycks could accomplish with their motto, *Als ich kann.*

(*vi.*) Christ Represented in Scenery from the Gospels.

"And so the Word had life; and wrought
With human hands the creed of creeds,
In loveliness of perfect deeds;
More strong than all poetic thought."

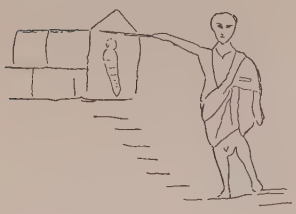
— Tennyson.

Another and a considerable step was taken towards depicting the Christ, when He began to be represented directly as Jesus, though under a purely ideal aspect, in scenes from the Gospels.[1]

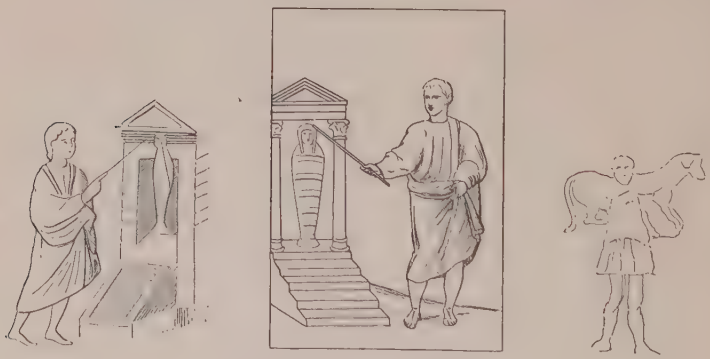
In this way various events recorded in the New Testament were shadowed forth, of which the commonest was the resurrection of Lazarus. They are in no sense pictures, but conventional reminiscences; and they only begin

[1] See Garrucci, Bk. vi., *Tipi del Nuovo Testamento.*

to appear after the triumph of the Church, when the purely symbolic epoch of Catacomb decoration began to be superseded. In all the representations of Lazarus, he stands at the door of his tomb, swathed in bands like an



Egyptian mummy, and Christ is touching him with a wand, the emblem of life-giving power. The sketches are never intended to *depict*, but only to *recall*. The merest scrawl became sufficient for this purpose in later days, as in the accompanying woodcuts. Many others are equally

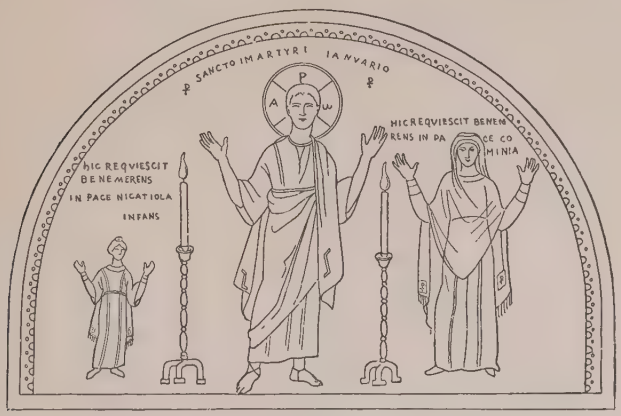


From cemetery of St. Priscilla.

rude, and are not intended for pictures at all, any more than those of Moses striking the rock, or of the Good Shepherd. Mabillon was once walking with Ferretti in the Catacombs, and beside one of the graves they found an Egyptian idol. Ferretti thought that it was a sign of idolatry, but Mabillon saw that its close resemblance to

the swathed mummy of Lazarus was sufficient to constitute it a type of the Resurrection.[1]

Sometimes, again, Jesus is painted between two disciples, or performing miracles of healing. But in all these pictures, when they belong to early centuries, He is depicted as majestic, triumphant, beardless, beautiful, youthful,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almost boyish.[2] There is no attempt at portraiture, or even at verisimilitude. The figures are intended to shadow forth a radiant immortality which could never wax old

[1] Maitland, *Ch. of the Catacombs*, 180; Mabillon, *Mus. Ital.* I. 137.

[2] The accompanying woodcuts from various cemeteries represent types of the boyish Christ at the well of Samaria, teaching the law, teaching His disciples, crowned with thorns, and seated in glory.

or decay. During the first four hundred years there is probably no representation of Christ as bearded, or as a

worn and weary sufferer.[1] The exclusion of all connotations of suffering was due to that holy self-restraint which marks the Art of the early Christian centuries.

1 "La figure de Christ jeune d'abord, vieillit de siècle en siècle, à mesure que le christianisme gagne lui-même en âge." — Didron, *Icon. Chrét.*, p. 354.

I shall not here touch on the modern stages of Art, to which I shall allude in later pages; but I may notice in passing, that *no* picture of Christ which can be regarded as purely naturalistic, is to be found before the Renaissance; and that the seventh and last stage — that of rude realism — does not occur till the sixteenth century, increasing in degradation down to some bad instances in modern days.

II.

RESERVE IN PAINTING CHRIST WAS INSISTED ON BY THE FATHERS.

μὴ γράφε τὸν Χριστόν. ἀρκεῖ γὰρ αὐτῷ ἡ μία τῆς ἐνσωματώσεως ταπεινοφροσύνη. — ASTERIUS, *Hom. i. de Div. et Lazaro.*

IT has sometimes been supposed that the early Christian dislike to the human presentation of Christ, except symbolically, allusively, and ideally, was due only to the superstitions of the poor and uneducated. How groundless is such a notion may be seen from the following evidence. It is matter of absolute demonstration that the same dislike to the seeming irreverence of painting an Eternal Being existed as strongly, or even more strongly, among the learned than among the poor.

Many of the early Christians (as we have said) looked with suspicion on all Art.[1] They had inherited the prepossessions of the Jews, to whom it had been forbidden, and they were surrounded with Pagan Art which was stained through and through with the worst pollutions. Tertullian does not indeed prohibit art altogether, but he writes very bitterly against Hermogenes, a Christian painter, whom he accuses of still working for Pagan patrons, and he does not view with much favour the painting of sacred figures on vessels of glass.[2] Clement of Alexandria, actuated, no

[1] Justin Martyr (*Dial. c. Tryph.*, p. 321) appeals to the second commandment.

[2] *De Pudicitia*, 7, 10. "Pastor quem in calice depingis." In the Apostolical Constitutions we read (viii. 32): *εἰδωλοποιὸς προσιὼν ἢ παυσάσθω ἢ ἀποβαλλέσθω.*

doubt, by a similar dread of Pagan influences, is careful to guard against the promiscuous use of current symbols. He passionately inveighs against the corruption of heathen pictures, and expresses himself adversely to artistic studies.[1] The large mind of Origen might have seemed likely to make him sympathize with Art as one beautiful means for the fuller expression of human faculties; but it is clear from his voluminous pages that the conditions of Pagan Art by which he was confronted were so dubious and degraded as to quench most of the sympathy which he might naturally have felt.[2] He who compares the frescoes of Pagan houses with those of the Catacombs will best feel the sweetness of the vernal air which, in the first centuries, was beginning to breathe through the world, and to clear away the choking fogs of materialism and lust.

Since Christians saw idols on all sides of them, and since those idols were often surrounded with seductiveness, and sometimes displayed with unblushing cynicism the fury of perverted appetites, they would naturally shrink with something like abhorrence from anything which might be confused with a material object of worship. Since they were taunted with being atheists, because they had neither temples nor altars,[3] it would have been strange, indeed, if they possessed pictures or images which could have been regarded as idolatrous. We have abundant evidence that not only the slaves and artisans of the Catacombs, but even the most erudite and thoughtful fathers, regarded any attempt to depict — as distinct from symbolically shadowing forth — the human Christ, as a profane and dangerous innovation. When Celsus aimed at Christians the covert taunt that they had pro-

[1] *Protrepticon*, I. § 62. He calls art deceitful (ἀπατηλός), and speaks of the common ἀναισχυντία even of their house decorations. Comp. §§ 42–59.

[2] Bishop Westcott refers to *c. Cels.* VIII. 17, *De Orat.* 17, as proof that "no religious use was as yet publicly made of imitative art."

[3] Min. Felix *Octav.* 32. "Delubra et aras non habemus."

duced no supreme artist like Phidias, Origen replied that Man is the best image (ἄγαλμα) of God.

As a proof of the fixity of this feeling for four and a half centuries I may mention the following facts:[1]—

i. "The Council of Eliberis," says Bishop Jeremy Taylor, "is very ancient and of great fame, in which it is expressly forbidden that what is worshipped should be depicted on the walls, and that, therefore, pictures ought not to be in churches."[2]

ii. In A.D. 326 the Empress Constantia, sister of Constantine, wrote to Eusebius of Cæserea to ask if he would send her a likeness (εἰκὼν) of Christ. The answer of the great historian was almost indignant. It was as follows: "And since you have written about some supposed likeness or other of Christ (ὡς δὴ τοῦ Χριστοῦ), what and what kind of likeness of Christ is there? Do you mean the true, unchangeable likeness which bears His impress; or that which for our sakes He took up when He put around Him the fashion of the form of a slave? Such images are forbidden by the second commandment. They are not to be found in churches, and are forbidden among Christians alone."

After telling the Empress that he had seen a woman carrying about what pretended to be pictures of Christ and of St. Paul, he says that he bought them from her for fear of the scandal they might cause to outsiders (ἑτέρους), if the heathen supposed that they took about with them the

[1] The following passages have been referred to by many writers, such as Bishop Jeremy Taylor, Bishop Münter, Jablonsky, Martigny, Kraus, R. St. J. Tyrrwhitt, etc., and lately by Bishop Westcott in his beautiful essay on *The Relation of Christianity to Art* (*Religious Thought of the West*, pp. 277–341). I must once more refer to them, because they are essential to my subject, but I have taken them from the original sources in the Councils and Fathers.

[2] This Council met at Elvira in Granada, at some date between A.D. 310 and 324. The venerable Hosius of Cordova is named second of the nineteen bishops who attended it. It passed eighty-one canons, of which the thirty-sixth was *Placuit picturas in ecclesia esse non debere, ne quod colitur et adoratur in parietibus depingatur.*

pictures of Him whom they adore. He entirely, therefore, and with anxiety, dissuades the Empress from desiring to possess anything of the kind. He urges all to prepare to see God by purifying their hearts. "And if," he says, "of superfluity" (ἐκ περιουσίας, *i.e.* in addition), "before the vision face to face which shall be, you attach great value to images of our Saviour, what better painter could we have than the Word of God Himself?"[1]

iii. In A.D. 340 Asterius, Bishop of Amasæa, expresses very similar sentiments. It was the custom of wealthy Pagan ladies to wear gauzy robes inwoven in gold thread with scenes of Pagan mythology. In the demoralizing contact of the Church with the world, the Christian ladies copied their example, but as they could not wear robes adorned with heathen legends, they substituted for them scenes taken from the Gospel history. To whom the holy Bishop says that they read the Gospel history, and picked out such scenes as the miracle of Cana, the paralytic carrying his bed, the healing of the blind, and of the woman with the issue, and the resurrection of Lazarus, and gave them over to the weavers.[2] "And in acting thus they think that they shew piety, and clothe themselves in garments acceptable to God. If they accept my advice, they will sell them, and pay honour to the *living* images of Christ. Paint not Christ; for the one humility of His Incarnation suffices Him, which for our sakes He voluntarily accepted. But carry about with you upon your soul in thought the bodiless Word. Do not have the paralytic on your garments, but seek out him who lies in helpless sickness": — and so forth, in a similar strain.[3]

iv. Epiphanius, Bishop of Salamis, who died A.D. 402,

[1] This letter is not found among the writings of Eusebius, but is quoted in the Acts of the Second Council of Nice (A.D. 787) from the Acts of the Second Council of Constantinople, A.D. 756. It is given in Migne, *Patrol. Græc.* XX. 1546.

[2] It is interesting to notice that the scenes are identical with those which recur most often in the Catacombs.

[3] Asterius, *Hom.* I. *De Div. et Laz.*; Migne, *Patrologia Græc.* XI. 167.

shewed a yet more energetic abhorrence of anything resembling a sacred picture. He was regarded as the saintliest and most orthodox prelate of his age, and this story is recorded by himself in his letter to John, Bishop of Jerusalem. It appears that, being at Anablatha, near Bethel in Palestine, over which, of course, he had no episcopal jurisdiction, he saw a lamp burning, and being informed that the building was a church, he entered it to pray. He saw there a curtain, dyed and embroidered, which had on it "an image, as it were, of Christ, or of some saint, for I cannot quite remember whose likeness it was. Horrified to see the likeness of a man, hanging, contrary to Scripture, in a Christian church, I tore it down, and ordered the vergers to use it as the shroud of some pauper. They murmured at me, and said that if I chose to tear it down, I ought at least to give another in exchange for it. I promised that I would do so, and would send it at once. But a little delay occurred while I was looking out for the best curtain I could find, for I thought that I ought to send one from Cyprus" (his own diocese). "Now I have sent the best I could discover, I beg you to order the presbyter of the church to accept it from the bearer, who is a Reader, and to instruct him that such curtains, which are contrary to our religion, ought not to be hung up in the church of Christ. For it touches your honour to be rather solicitous to remove a source of offence which is unworthy of the church of Christ." [1]

v. The one man who did more than any one else to break down the instinctive and reverent dislike of Christians for sacred pictures in churches was Paulinus, Bishop of Nola, who died A.D. 431. He devoted himself to the almost extravagant cult of St. Felix of Nola, before whose shrine (among other innovations) lamps were suspended, and candles kept continually burning. He decorated, with scenes from the Old Testament, the cloister of the splendid

[1] Epiphan. *Ep. ad Joann. Hierosol.* (translated by Jerome, and printed in Vallarsi's edition of his works).

church which he erected in honour of his patron, and in this manner he attempted — by means which he seems to think required some apology, and which, on his own shewing, were not very successful — to teach the rude multitudes who flocked to the festival of the saint. But even this bold innovator shrank from painting Christ, except symbolically. "The works of our hands," he sings, "contain Thee not, O greatest Creator, whom the world, with its whole substance, contains not."[1] His only attempt to represent Christ is thus described: —

"Amid the celestial grove of the resplendent Paradise
Christ, in (the symbol of) a snowy lamb, stands under the blood-stained cross,
A lamb, given an innocent victim to unjust death."[2]

The example of Paulinus led to further developments. St. Augustine complains that he knew many worshippers of superstitious pictures; and when Serenus, Bishop of Massilia, broke up pictures and images in churches, St. Gregory the Great disapproves of his breaking them, though he commends his opposition to their idolatrous abuse.[3]

In point of fact, the use of pictures or other representa-

[1] *De S. Felice*, IX., XXV. 541-594; *Ep.* XXXII. 17.

[2] The reason offered by Paulinus for his novelties was the one ordinarily adduced. It was *Picturae sunt laicorum libri;* pictures were excused and encouraged on the plea that they tended to the edification of the ignorant. This was repeated by Pope Gregory II. in his letter to Leo the Isaurian. In the sixteenth century, when a curé of St. Nizier in Troyes introduced painted glass windows representing the scenes of the Gospels, he wrote at the base of the west window, "To the holy multitude of God," just as Pope Sixtus III. had done at Sta. Maria Maggiore, in 433. On this plea, Benedict Biscop, Abbot of Wearmouth, introduced pictures from Italy into an English church about A.D. 680, and John Damascenes defended them in the eighth century. For these and other instances, see Didron, *Icon. Chrét.*, pp. 4-10. "The ignorant," wrote Don Juan de Buloz, "may read their duty in a picture, though they cannot search for it in books."

[3] Aug. *De morib. Eccl.* I. 34; *De Fide et Symb.* VII.; *c. Adimant.* XIII.; Jeremy Taylor, *l.c.*

tions of Christ invaded the Church from a very tainted source. Simon Magus is charged with having been the first to introduce images.[1] Irenæus tells us that images of Christ were unheard of, till the Gnostics — especially the corrupt Carpocracians — pretended that such an one had been made by Pilate. Clement of Alexandria, Origen, and Lactantius sternly condemn their use. The two former distinctly appeal to the second commandment in language which reminds us of the Book of Wisdom.[2]

[1] Theodoret, *Hær.* I.

[2] Iren. I. 24; Epiphan. *Hær.* I. 27; Aug. *De hær.;* Clem. *Strom.* VII. 18; *Protrept.* § 3; Origen, *c. Cels.* IV., VII. § 66.

III.

REASONS FOR THE RESERVE.

2 Cor. v. 16: *εἰ καὶ ἐγνώκαμεν κατὰ σάρκα Χριστόν, ἀλλὰ νῦν οὐκ ἔτι γινώσκομεν.*

Before we proceed to trace the final breaking down of this ancient reserve in Christian Art, and the substitution of *pictures* of Christ for symbols, types, and conventional ideals of Him, it is important and interesting to consider the reasons for a feeling so deeply rooted and so long-continued.

i. The first reason was the reverent awe and intense spirituality of the first ages.

We have already seen that the Christians of the Catacombs could not represent Christ even in His human manifestation without a painful sense that to do so was to violate the second commandment, by the spirit of which, if not by the letter, they held themselves to be strictly bound.

ii. A second reason was their habitual manner of regarding their Lord and Master, not as the afflicted man, not as the human sufferer, but as the Glorified, the Risen, the Ascended Christ, Who had forever sat down at the right hand of the Majesty on High. The common, the almost universal and exclusive custom of regarding and representing Him in defeat and anguish, in ghastliness and torture, with livid face and blood-stained limbs, as we see in all the hideous Calvaries and road-side crosses and images of the crétinous Swiss-Italian valleys, was not only

unknown to the Christians of the first four centuries, but would have been abhorred and repudiated by them. It was a revolution complete and absolute from the days when joy, abounding gladness, fervid exultation, an almost intoxication of inspiring enthusiasm, was as much a characteristic of Christianity as simplicity of heart. It was due to the gloom, despondency, and misery which afflicted later centuries, and to the exaggerated, self-macerating, Manichean asceticism which was only redeemed from being as unmitigated a curse as it was a frightful error by the sincerity of those who thought that thereby they were pleasing God. But under this influence the smile which irradiates the boyish face of the Christ of the Catacombs fades away more and more disastrously as the ages go on and is changed into an expression of misery and wrath.

iii. The third reason was the vivid sense of Christ's near immediate Presence. The realization of this Incorporeal, Eternal, Spiritual nearness made Him infinitely closer to the souls with whom and in whom He dwelt than He could have been by His bodily Presence among His dearest Apostles. The early Christians never fell — none even of the Fathers fell — into the monstrous modern perversion of regarding the whole Christian Dispensation as being "the days when the Bridegroom *is taken from us*," and, therefore, days in which we must continually mourn and fast. The early Christians — not yet misled by the errors and corruptions of the Dark Ages perpetuated in the Mediæval Church — believed the plain words of Christ that it was *expedient* even for His nearest and best-beloved that He should be taken away from them,[1] because His departure from them was the condition of that gift of the Holy Spirit, Who was to make Him far nearer to them for evermore. To the Christians of the Catacombs the symbols, types, and idealizations in which they rejoiced were but dim and distant, yet pleasant reminders

[1] John xvi. 7.

of that Invisible yet ever-present Personality which was their hope and strength. They would have said in the spirit of St. Paul, "Yea, though we have known Christ after the flesh, yet now we know Him so no more."[1]

[1] 2 Cor. v. 16.

Book II.

THE PERSONAL ASPECT OF THE SAVIOUR.

I.

ALL TRADITION OF CHRIST'S HUMAN ASPECT WAS LOST.

"Quâ fuerit Ille facie penitus ignoramus." — Aug. *De Trin.* VIII. 5.

"Of the physiognomy of Jesus," says Père Didon, in his *Vie de Jésus*, "contemporary documents have left us no portrait. Some Fathers, understanding too literally the passage of Isaiah on the persecuted Servant of Jehovah, have even refused Him beauty. If the face of man reflects the invisible soul, Jesus must have been the most beautiful among the sons of men. The light of God, veiled by the Shadow of Sorrow, illuminated His brow with a softened splendour which human art will never succeed in painting. The Greeks, those masters of æsthetic, have given Him the Divine majesty; the Latins, the moving aspect of the Man of Sorrows. Thus He has the aureole and the nimbus, — the aureole of a martyr, and the nimbus of a god."

Whatever may be written to the contrary, it is absolutely certain that the world and the Church have lost for ever all vestige of trustworthy tradition concerning the aspect of Jesus on earth.

There is not one syllable in the Gospels or in the Epistles respecting the appearance of His form or face. Nor is there the vestige of any reference to it in the literature of the first two centuries.

The fact itself is deeply significant. It is impossible that the earthly aspect of Christ should have been so completely forgotten if the early Christians had centred their thoughts on the Human Sufferer, the Man Christ Jesus,

and not much more on the Risen, the Ascended, the Glorified, the Eternal King, God of God, Light of Light, Very God of Very God. The first preachers of the Faith dwelt in no wise on the physical details of the transitory manifestation; their thoughts were absorbed in the Eternal Session. May it not be also possible that the witnesses of His Resurrection had been struck with the difference between Jesus as they had seen Him in the days when He had "*emptied Himself* of His glory," and the glorified Body in which He appeared to them after His Resurrection? That there was a difference is clear. Even the loving gaze of Mary Magdalene did not instantly recognize Him. To the two disciples, on the way to Emmaus, He remained unknown till the breaking of bread. The Apostles, when He first appeared among them, were terrified, and thought that they saw a Spirit.

This is because the *exinanitio*, the *kenosis*, as it is theologically termed, involved in the purely human condition, in which He "wore a tent like ours and of the same material," vanished with the fulness of perfect life, in which, after His triumph over Death, "the Body of His humiliation" was replaced by "the Body of His glory," which transcended the ordinary limitations of Time and Space.[1]

However that may be, the remarks of the earliest Fathers on the subject of Christ's aspect do not profess to be based upon tradition, but only on applications of the Prophecies, or on *a priori* reasoning. They did not pretend to refer to any authoritative, much less to any decisive, account of how He had looked on earth, as He moved among His disciples, a Man among men.

There were, in the Church of the first centuries, two views diametrically opposed to each other.

i. The earliest writers who allude to the subject at all are unanimous in asserting that He had no human comeliness. They were led to this view chiefly by the passages

[1] John xx. 19; Luke xxiv. 31, etc.

in Isaiah about the Suffering Servant of the Lord, which they applied to Christ both literally and in its details. They therefore said of Him: —

"His visage was so marred more than any man, and His form more than the sons of men" (Isa. lii. 14);

and, —

"He hath no form nor comeliness, and when we see Him there is no beauty that we should desire Him. He was despised and rejected of men; a Man of Sorrows and acquainted with grief; and as one from whom men hide their face He was despised, and we esteemed Him not" (Isa. liii. 2, 3).

But there were other reasons why they welcomed this opinion. On the one hand, they lived in days of trial and affliction, and they needed the support of His sympathy as a sufferer; on the other, they were surrounded by a heathendom that deified material beauty.[1] In Alexandria, especially, heathendom had just caused in them a reaction of mighty disgust and indignation by raising the beautiful minion of an emperor into a god worshipped in temples, and honoured with unnumbered statues. Human beauty, at such a time, had for them but few associations which were not connected with Pagan degradation.

The earliest reference to the aspect of Jesus is in Justin Martyr. He says that when Jesus came to the Jordan, "He appeared without beauty (ἀειδὴς) as the Scriptures proclaimed."[2]

Clement of Alexandria says,[3] "Himself also, the Head of the Church, passed through the world unlovely in the flesh, and without form, thereby teaching us to look at the Unseen and incorporate of the Divine Cause." He quotes Isaiah liii. 3, as the description of Him in prophecy.[4] Again, he describes Jesus as empty-

[1] Gieseler, *Eccl. Hist.* I. 65 n., E. Tr.

[2] *Dial. c. Tryph.* 14, 36, 85, 88. He appeals to Ps. xxii. and Isa. liii.

[3] *Strom.* III. 17, § 103.

[4] Id. *Strom.* II. 5, § 22.

ing Himself of all human beauty in the flesh, while He bestowed upon us the adornment of Immortality.[1] Once more, he makes the important remark: "For instance, not in vain did the Lord will to use a commonplace (εὐτελεῖ) form of body, that no one might hold aloof from His utterances while praising His bloom and wondering at His beauty." [2] And once more, he says, that He was "base in aspect" (*αἰσχρὸς τὴν ὄψιν*), "not displaying the beauty of the flesh, but manifesting the beauty of the soul in His beneficence, and that of the flesh in His immortality." [3]

Tertullian, in arguing for the reality of human nature in Christ as Very Man, says, as though it were certain, that the question, "Whence has He this learning, and these wondrous works?" was the question of men who despised His human aspect, — "so completely was His body devoid even of human nobleness, much more of heavenly lustre.[4] Even if the Prophets hold silence about His ignoble appearance, the very sufferings and contumelies He endured speak. His sufferings proved that His body was human; His contumelies that it was unlovely. Would any one have dared to graze with the tip of his nail a new body (*corpus novum*), or to disgrace with spittings a face which did not deserve them?" The fourteenth chapter of his book against the Jews deals with His voluntary humiliation, and says, "He was not even pleasing in appearance." [5]

So completely did this view prevail, that Celsus actually taunted the Christians with their worship of one who was so mean in appearance.

[1] Id. *Pæd.* III. 1, § 3.

[2] Id. *Strom.* VI. 17, § 151.

[3] *Pæd.* III. 1.

[4] Tert. *de Carne Christe*, IX.: "Adeo nec humanae honestatis corpus fuit, nedum coelestis claritatis."

[5] Id. c. *Jud.* 14: "Ne aspectu quidem honestus." The phrase "corpus *novum*" means one of unheard-of beauty. Comp. Aug. in Ps. cxxvii. "nisi foedum putarent non insisterent. Mirabilis forma exarmasset tortores."

ORIGEN, in reply, admits the general truth of the charge, but says that "though something was perhaps lacking to the Saviour's beauty, yet the expression of the face was noble and divine," and that His aspect varied with the spiritual capacities of the worshipper.[1]

Celsus had said that if Jesus was divine, His person must have possessed grandeur, beauty, impressiveness (*κατάπληξις*), whereas, "He was, as they report, little, and ill-favoured, and ignoble." Origen admits that from some passages it might be inferred that Christ was ill-favoured (*δυσειδὴς*), but not that He was ignoble (*ἀγενὴς*); nor is there any certain evidence that He was dwarfish. After quoting, as usual, from Isaiah liii. 1–3, he says that, on the other side, we must not overlook Psalm xlv. 3–4 (LXX.): "Gird Thy sword upon Thy thigh, O thou most mighty, *with Thy comeliness and beauty*." Celsus had quoted the one passage which prophetically indicated the Coming Christ, and ignored the other. Origen then proceeds to speak of "*the changing relation of Christ's body, according to the capacity of the spectator . . . inasmuch as it appeared to each one of such a nature as it was requisite for him to behold it*." In proof of this, he refers to the Transfiguration, and says that "there is something mystical in this doctrine." Celsus, and other outside critics, "cannot know the meaning of the different appearances of Jesus."

All this time there had been no authorized or acknowledged picture of Christ. Irenæus (202) spoke with strong indignation against the Basilidian and Carpocratian Gnostics, who had among their images a figure of Christ, which they declared was derived from one which had been made by order of Pilate, and which they at once adorned with wreaths and degraded by placing it side by side with busts of Pythagoras, Plato, and Aristotle.[2] It was prob-

[1] This answer to the sneer of Celsus occurs in *C. Cels.* VI. 75, 76.

[2] Iren. *c. Hær.* I. 24. 5. See, too, Aug. *De Hær.* VII. "Sectae ipsius (Carpocratis) fuisse traditur socia quaedam Marcellina, quae colebat

ably from these pseudo-likenesses that the Emperor Alexander Severus, in the third century, derived the statue of Christ which, according to Lampridius, he placed in his *lararium* with others of Abraham, Orpheus, and Apollonius of Tyana.[1] But Irenæus denied that they had the smallest sanction for the type which they adopted.

ii. The reaction which set in against the views of the early Fathers was perfectly natural. It was felt that those views rested solely on subjective considerations which seized on the passages of the Prophets which seemed to support them and overlooked others. But since this method of argument shewed that *nothing was really known* respecting Christ's face, there were counter-subjective impressions which told more strongly the other way, and which might, with equal right, appeal to passages of the Old Testament. "The brightness and majesty of His Divinity," says St. Jerome, "hidden under the veil of His flesh, shed its rays over His human countenance, and subdued all who had the happiness to gaze upon it."[2]

Again, in writing to Principia on the 44th Psalm, Jerome applies to Christ the verse "Thou art fairer than the children of men." How, he asks, could this be said of one whom Isaiah described as having no beauty that we could desire Him? That description, he answers, only applies to the body of Christ, as it was defaced by blows and spitting, and the verse of the Psalm to the beauty of the virtues in His sacred and adorable body. "For unless He had possessed something starry (*sidereum quiddam*) in His face and eyes, the Apostles would never have followed Him at once, nor would those who came to seize Him have fallen to the ground."

St. Augustine takes the same side.[3] There were, he

imagines Jesu et Pauli et Homeri et Pythagorae, adorando incensumque ponendo." See Raoul-Rochette, pp. 15–18.

[1] Lamprid. *Alex. Severus*, 29.

[2] Jer. *in Matt.* i. 8.

[3] Aug. *De Trin.* VIII. 4, 5.

says, in his time, innumerable pictures of Christ, which were all different; yet His aspect must have been one. If it be lawful to appeal to the Old Testament to decide the question, we may refer to the verse of the 44th Psalm and to the beauty of His ancestor David. Apart from this, human beauty, when it is true beauty, is but the translucence of goodness, so that He *must* have been beautiful as an Infant, beautiful on earth, beautiful in Heaven. But this argument is, he admits, confessedly of an *a priori* character; for "*qua fuerit Ille facie penitus ignoramus.*" Augustine was in communication with all the leading spirits of the Christian world. Both he and Jerome had spent a part of their lives in Rome, and the former tells us that in his youth he had been a frequent visitor to the Catacombs. Nothing, therefore, can be clearer than that at the beginning of the fifth century there neither existed in the Catacombs nor anywhere else any likeness of Christ which was regarded as more than at the best conjectural.

Other writers took different sides. St. Ambrose, St. Chrysostom, and Theodoret held the same view as St. Jerome and St. Augustine. St. Basil (d. 379) and St. Cyril of Alexandria held the opposite opinion because of their pronounced exaltation of an unscriptural and unnatural asceticism. This led them to acquiesce in practices which needlessly and perniciously weakened and defaced that human body. They dishonoured the body of man as the tomb of the soul, when they should have kept it bright, strong, and noble as its living temple.[1] Cyril of

[1] We see from Basil (*Ep.* 205) and Gregory of Nyssa (d. 394), that, by their time, pictures of Christ had begun to be exhibited. In the ninth century, Photius says that each nation assimilated Christ to its own type, Greek, Latin, Indian, Ethiopian, etc. Some few have even gone so far as to imagine that the Saviour of the world was a leper. This was because the rendering of Isa. liii. 4, in the Vulgate, for *stricken*, is "Nos putavimus eum *quasi leprosum.*" There can, I think, be little doubt that some of the ghastly wax and wooden figures of Christ in the Swiss and Italian Calvaries have been influenced by the Vulgate rendering of 1 Pet. ii. 24: "Ejus *livore* sanati sumus."

Alexandria characteristically says that Jesus was the most debased in look of the children of men.[1]

iii. Assuredly the opinion of the great Latin Fathers had much the stronger reasons in its support. At least as much may be said for it on the ground of Old Testament analogies, and it has much more in its favour both (*a*) from the reason of things and (*b*) from what we read of Jesus in the Gospels.

(*a*) "Historically we know," says Keim,[2] "that the homage paid by antiquity to the Saviour in the glorification of His flesh, while we curtail its details, is right upon the whole. We cannot easily think of the even balance and harmony of the spirit that rests in God, as united to bodily decrepitude, or even to a repellent physiognomy: we think of him as healthy, vigorous, of expressive countenance, not, as Winer and Hase supposed on insufficient grounds, without characteristic features; as if a Spirit and a will like His must not needs create what was full of character! Perhaps He was not exactly beautiful; but at any rate noble, with His whole heart in His features, of prepossessing appearance."

The ancients were certainly justified in regarding real beauty as the sacrament of goodness. The greatest and most religious of the Italian painters, like Botticelli and Fra Bartolommeo, never forgot the true lesson which they had learnt from Savonarola, that "Creatures are beautiful in proportion as they approximate to the beauty of their Creator, and that perfection of bodily form is relative to beauty of intellect."

(*b*) As regards the Gospels we see, with great distinctness, that every detail points to the certainty that there was something majestic and winning in the personal Presence of Jesus. It is true that we are told of the beauty of the young Herodian prince and priest, Aristob-

[1] *De Nudat. Noe*, II. (Opp. I. 43): ἀλλὰ τὸ εἶδος αὐτοῦ ἄτιμον παρὰ πάντας τοὺς υἱοὺς τῶν ἀνθρώπων.

[2] *Life of Christ*, II. 193 (E. T.).

ulus, and that nothing of the kind is mentioned, even by secular historians, concerning Jesus. On the other hand, all that we read of Him in the New Testament points in the direction of a majestic individuality.

Thus it is recorded that in His boyhood "He increased in wisdom and stature, and *in favour with God and man*," and that, in the Temple, the great Rabbis "wondered at His understanding and answers." We can easily imagine that there might be some breath of true tradition in the story of the Apocryphal Gospel of the Infancy. It says that, on one occasion, the boys of Nazareth took Him, and made Him their King, and crowned with flowers the brow which was thereafter to be crowned with thorns, and made themselves His attendants and bade all the passers-by to do homage to Him, saying, "Come hither, and adore the King, and then go on thy way."[1]

In the records of His manhood we see the quick impression which He made on all alike with whom He came in contact. The woman of Samaria had only talked for a few moments with Him when she perceived that He was a prophet. The woman in the multitude could not restrain her enraptured cry, "Blessed is the womb that bare Thee, and the breasts which Thou hast sucked!"[2] Even the Roman lady, the wife of Pontius Pilate, who can only have caught a glimpse of Him, sent to warn her husband, "Have thou nothing to do with that just man, for I have suffered many things this night in a dream because of Him." The impassioned devotion of the Magdalene, the self-sacrificing ministrations of the Holy Women, would hardly have been elicited by any one who was, as Justin says, "base in aspect, and uncomely."

Nor do ugly and marred human beings readily kindle that tender love and enthusiasm and confidence in young children which — as we see again and again in the Gospels — was inspired by Jesus. The little children nestled gladly in His loving arms, and even the Levitic choir-boys,

[1] See *Arab. Evang. Inf.* C. 41. [2] Luke xi. 27.

carried away by their enthusiasm, horrified their malignant priests by shouting "Hosanna" to Him in the Temple courts.

We must also observe the instant effect of His word and presence upon men of all sorts and conditions, not only on the diseased and afflicted, but on the strong, the noble, and the young. The blind, and the lame, and the lepers instinctively cried to Him for mercy. The sight of His divine calm exorcised the wild perversion of the demoniacs. He gathered round Him, as it were, a garland of the fresh, bright youths of His native Galilee, who at a word forsook all and followed Him. The rich young ruler came running, kneeling, prostrating himself at His feet.[1] The vulgar throng of His arresters shrank back and fell to the ground before His unarmed innocence. The eagle spirit of the Great Forerunner, which never quailed before any man, or any multitude of men, felt itself bowed to the dust before His milder majesty and stainless manhood. Even the blood-stained Pilate was awfully impressed by Him in His utter helplessness, and recognized the unique and inherent royalty which shone forth from the humiliation of shame and spitting. The centurion who saw Him amid the infamous roar of universal execration — who watched Him subjected to the most abject circumstances of insult to which man can be exposed — exclaimed in the hush of awe after His death, "Truly, this was the" (or *a*) "Son of God!" Even the brutal multitude who had gibed at Him were so much overawed by the circumstances of His Crucifixion that they returned to Jerusalem smiting on their breasts.

"It is plain," says Keim, "that His was a manly, commanding, prophetic figure. The people, so much at the mercy of outward impressions, could not otherwise have greeted Him, especially just after John, as a prophet, nay, as the Son of David; and the reproach of His foes would else have attacked Him, even on the side of bodily defects.

[1] Mark x. 17, *προσδραμὼν . . . γονυπετήσας.*

Besides, we have the fact lying before us that His appearance on the scene, His word, His voice, His eye, seized and shook the hearers and beholders; that many women, children, sick and poor, felt happy at His feet and in His presence. That the full freshness, quick vitality, and penetrating sharpness of all the senses were His, is shown by the rich view of the world which His Spirit was enabled to gather in. His vigour of health is proved by the wearing restlessness of His life, and by the daily expenditure of strength, both of body and mind, demanded by the stormy importunity of the mental and physical misery of Israel."

I should draw from the Apocalypse another argument for the majesty of His appearance. Would His favourite disciple, whose head had lain upon His breast at the Last Supper, have described Him in a way entirely antagonistic to the facts of His human appearance? Yet this is the picture to be painted.

"And I turned to see the Voice which spake with me. And being turned, I saw seven golden lamps; and in the midst of the seven lamps *one like unto the Son of Man*, clothed with a garment down to the feet, and girt about the breasts with a golden girdle. His head and His hair were white like wool, as white as snow; and His eyes were as a flame of fire; and His feet like unto fine brass as if they burned in a furnace; and His voice as the sound of many waters; . . . and His countenance was as the sun shineth in his strength."

Stupendous indeed was the difference between this vision and the human Jesus! The Apostle who saw it might well have thought —

> "Can this be He, who wont to stray,
> A pilgrim on the world's highway,
> Oppressed by power, and mocked by pride,
> The Nazarene, the Crucified?"

I think, however, that the terms of the description tell

entirely in favour of the view that Jesus wore on earth an aspect of dignity and beauty, and this view, though it struggled for existence with the debased ideals of will-worship and self-maceration, prevailed ultimately in the Universal Church.

II.

PRETENDED PICTURES AND LEGENDARY DESCRIPTIONS OF CHRIST.

"Quale è colui, che . . .
Viene a veder la Veronica nostra,
Che per l' antica fama non si sazia."
— DANTE, *Parad.* XXXI. 103.

BEFORE I proceed to show the actual manner in which Christ was presented in Art, — that is, the ideal under which He presented Himself to thousands of different minds in different epochs of Christendom, — I must pause to point out how completely the existence of the controversy of which I have traced the history, disproves the genuineness of the attempts to produce that likeness which baseless legends asserted to exist. These asserted likenesses passed under the name of *eikones* or *imagines acheiropoietoi*.

1. There is the picture which Christ is said to have sent to Abgarus V., king of Edessa, with the apocryphal letter recorded by Eusebius,[1] and also quoted by Moses Chorenensis.[2] Abgar, surnamed Ucomo the Black, is said to have reigned from A.D. 9 to A.D. 46. Abgar's letter and the supposed reply of Jesus are probably as old as the third century. The king is supposed to have sent the Greek emissaries who came to Philip in Holy Week desiring to

[1] Euseb. *H. E.* I. 13. He professes to derive it from Syriac documents preserved at Edessa, *H. E.* IV. 27. Evagrius calls it a "God-made likeness" (θεότευκτος). Hofmann, *Leben Jesu nach d. Apocryphen*, p. 308. Dr. Glückselig gives what he supposes to be an ancient Coptic copy of it found at Nazareth.

[2] *Hist. Armen.* II. 28.

see Jesus, and to have entrusted them with a letter to Jesus, inviting him to a safe and beautiful retreat at Edessa, if he would come there and heal the king's disease.[1] The brief reply is mainly couched in Scriptural language, and is said to have been written by Christ "with His own hands."[2] It declines the offer, and adds, "When I am taken up, I will send thee one of My disciples to heal thy sickness." The miracle is said to have been wrought by a picture which Jesus sent, which was conveyed by the hands of Thaddeus, one of the Seventy. One account says that Ananias, one of the Greek emissaries, was a painter, and tried to take the portrait of Christ. He failed, from the splendour of His countenance; but Jesus thereupon washed His face, and miraculously impressed His features (*ἀπεικόνισμα*) on the linen cloth with which He wiped them.[3] This miraculous likeness, according to Evagrius, saved Edessa when besieged by Chosroes, A.D. 540.[4] In 727 Gregory II. in his letter to the iconoclastic Emperor Leo III., bids him send and see this image which has become an object of wide-spread pilgrimage.[5] According to others, the likeness was on a tile. The supposed cloth was transferred to Constantinople, A.D. 944. Possession of it is now claimed by the Armenian Church in Genoa, and by St. Sylvester's at Rome. It is said to have fur-

[1] Leprosy, Cedrenus, *Hist.* p. 165; gout, Procopius, *De Bell. Pers.* II. 12.

[2] *Arab. Gosp. Inf.* XLVIII.; Niceph. II. 7; Evagrius, IV. 27; Cureton, *Anc. Syriac Documents.* See *Dict. of Christian Biog.* s.vv. *Abgar* and *Thaddeus.*

[3] According to John of Damascus, His own garment, *De Fid. Orth.* IV. 16.

[4] Evagr. *H. E.* IV. 37; Leo Diaconus, *Hist.* IV. 10; Niebuhr, *Script. Byzant.* XI. 70; Labbe, VII. 12.

[5] See Represent. of Jesus Christ, *Dict. of Christ. Antt.* pp. 874–880 (by Rev. R. St. J. Tyrwhitt); Abgar (Armen. *Aeghair*, or Exalted); Euseb. *H. E.* I. 13; Jul. African. *Fragn. ap.*; G. Syncell. *Chronogr.*; Evagrius, *H. E.* V. 27; Joh. Damasc. *De imagin.* I., *De Fid. Orth.* IV. 17; Niceph. *H. E.* II. 7. Mr. Heaphy's picture is only from one of the conventional copies.

nished the type which was followed by the most ancient mosaics. It was youthful and beautiful.

2. Equally famous and imaginary is the "Veronica" likeness of the Suffering Saviour crowned with thorns, now at St. Peter's, Rome, and last publicly exhibited — though practically little or nothing was to be seen but a blackish cloth in a gilt frame — to the Bishops assembled to pass the dogma of the Virgin's Immaculate Conception in 1884.[1] Veronica is said to have been a holy matron who offered to Christ a handkerchief to wipe His face on His way to Golgotha. For her reward His image was miraculously stamped upon the cloth. Many legends, all varying, and many of them wildly absurd, have gathered round this nucleus. According to some, the woman was Martha of Bethany. The cloth is said to have been brought to Rome in 700. It is disputed whether Veronica is a corruption of *Vera icon*, "true likeness," or of the name Berenice.[2]

These were the most famous of the "images not made with hands."

3. Veronica is also the name given in some legends to the woman with the issue of blood, who is said by Eusebius to have erected in front of her house a statue of Christ healing her by His touch. Eusebius says that he himself had seen this statue at Paneas. It was destroyed by Julian, who substituted in its place his own like-

[1] See *Edinb. Rev.*, October, 1867. Mons. Barbier de Montault, the only ecclesiastic, not a bishop, who was allowed to see the Veil of St. Veronica on Dec. 8, 1854, writes, "The place of the impression exhibits only a blackish surface, not giving any evidence of human features." He says that the souvenirs sold of it in the Sacristy of St. Peter's have not the least iconographic value. *Ann. Archéol.* XXIII. 232. Villani (VIII. 36) mentions that it was shewn at the Jubilee of 1300 — "Per consolazione dei cristiani pellegrini si monstrava in San Piero la Veronica del Sudario di Cristo." See Herzog, *Realencykl.* XVII. 86. Dufresne *Glossar.* s.v. *Veronica.* Dante himself describes it as "quell' Imagine benedetta, la quale Gesù C. lasciò a noi per esemplo della sua figura" (*Vita nuova*).

[2] A copy "from the Sacristy of St. Peter's" is given by Mr. Heaphy, p. 4.

ness.[1] There are many divergent stories about this statue erected by Veronica. It is now believed to have been in reality a votive statue erected by the city of Cæsarea Philippi to the Emperor Hadrian, with the inscription, "To the Saviour, the Benefactor." Many kings and emperors were in the provinces described as *Soter*, "saviour," or *Euergetes*, "benefactor," and this originated the mistake. In any case the statue was broken up and lost. Even had it been what it was supposed to be, the notion of any likeness is out of the question. Eusebius entirely disapproved of it as heathenish.[2] Nothing is more certain than that the early Christians utterly repudiated both statues and actual pictures which pretended to represent the Lord.[3]

4. Various ancient pictures are attributed to the skill of St. Luke.[4] Possibly the notion rose from the works of a Greek painter at Mount Athos, who bore the name of Lucas. The story that the Evangelist painted Christ occurs first in a work by a Greek monk, Michael (d. 826). This is repeated by Simeon Metaphrastes (fl. 936), and by St. Thomas Aquinas (d. 1274), who says that the picture was in the chapel of the Santa Scala. It was vouched for by Gregory IX. in 1234.

5. The famous *Volto Santo*, or "Holy Face," at Lucca, which furnished to William Rufus his favourite oath, — "by the face of God," — is carved in wood on a crucifix, and is attributed to Nicodemus.[5] It is an early Byzantine

[1] Euseb. *H. E.* VII. 18; Sozomen, *H. E.* V. 21; Asterius, Bishop of Amasæa (Labbe, VII. 210).

[2] He says that she erected it *ἐθνικῇ συνηθείᾳ σωτῆρας τιμᾶν.*

[3] See a learned note in the translation of Tertullian, in the "Oxford Library of the Fathers," p. 109. Dr. Pusey there quotes Orig. *c. Cels.* IV. 31, VIII. 17; Lactant. *De Mort. Persec.* C. 12; Clem. Alex. *Strom.* VII. 5; *Protrept.*, p. 18, § 4; Tert. *De Idol.* and *c. Hermog.* The Encratites were severely blamed for having pictures of Christ. Iren. *c. Hær.* XXV. 6; Epiphan. *Hær.* XXVII. 6.

[4] One is given by Heaphy, p. 18.

[5] Dante alludes to it, *Inf.* XXI. 48: "Qui non ha luogo il santo volto." An image at Berytus, made by Nicodemus, is mentioned in a passage

crucifix in the Duomo, and was brought to Lucca from the Holy Land in 782. It is only exhibited three times a year.

6. A head of Christ was said to have been carved on an emerald, now lost, known as "the Emerald Vernicle of the Vatican." Bajazet II. gave it to Pope Innocent VIII. about 1488.[1] It is said to have been made by order of the Emperor Tiberius, but is probably a plaque of the early Byzantine School. The engraving is, in fact, a mere reproduction of the Saviour's head in Raphael's Miraculous Draught of Fishes. This, however, may have been influenced by older paintings which were common in the sixteenth century.[2]

As to these and all others, we may say with Dr. Pusey, "No account of any picture of our Lord being publicly used occurs in the six first centuries."[3]

7. Passing over other supposed pictures, we come to three famous apocryphal *descriptions* of the Man Christ Jesus.

i. One was given by John of Damascus in the eighth century, and is preserved in Nicephorus.[4] Jesus is described as beautiful and strikingly tall, with fair and slightly curling locks, on which no hand save that of His mother had ever passed. He had dark eyebrows which met in the middle, an oval countenance, a complexion pale, olive-tinted, and of the colour of wheat (σιτόχρους), bright eyes like the Virgin's, a slightly stooping attitude, a voice sweet and sonorous, and a look expressive of patience, nobleness, and wisdom.[5]

from Pseudo-Athanasius, read before the Second Council of Nice, A.D. 787. Labbe, VII. 217.

[1] C. W. King, *Archæol. Jour.* 1870, pp. 181–190; Way, *Ib.* 1872, pp. 109–119.

[2] Churchill Babington, in *Dict. of Christ. Antt.* I. 718.

[3] "The first is in Leontius Neapolitanus, *Apol. pro Christ.* A.D. 600." —Tertullian, "Library of the Fathers," p. 109.

[4] John Damasc. *Opp.* I. 340; Niceph. *H. E.* I. 40.

[5] The Damascene indignantly reproaches the Manichees with the notion

ii. The second description is fuller. It is found in a supposed letter of "Lentulus, president of the people of Jerusalem, to the Roman Senate." "There has appeared," it says, "in our times a man of tall stature, beautiful, with a venerable countenance, which they who look on it can both love and fear. His hair is waving and crisp, somewhat wine-coloured, and glittering as it flows down over His shoulders, with a parting in the middle, after the manner of the Nazarenes.[1] His brow is smooth and most serene; His face is without any spot or wrinkle, and glows with a delicate flush. His nose and mouth are of faultless contour; the beard is abundant and hazel-coloured like His hair, not long, but forked. His eyes are prominent, brilliant, and change their colour. In denunciation He is terrible, calm and loving in admonition, cheerful but with unimpared dignity. He has never been seen to laugh, but oftentimes to weep. His hands and limbs are beautiful to look upon. In speech He is grave, reserved, modest, and He is fair among the children of men."[2]

It is needless to say that there was no such person as Lentulus, no such office as president of the people of Jerusalem, and that no such letter was ever sent to the Roman people. It is in fact a forgery, not older than the twelfth century; but it is probably based on earlier traditions and pictorial representations of Christ, and has greatly affected the pictures of later artists.

iii. A Greek description by Epiphanius Monachus closely resembles it.[3] "My Christ and God," it says, "was beautiful exceedingly. He stood six perfect feet in height. His hair was long, golden-coloured, not very thick, and

that Jesus was ugly. He says that He resembled the Virgin, and Adam. *Opp.* I. 630.

[1] "Nazarites" is meant.

[2] The Latin text of the famous description is not found earlier than the works of St. Anselm of Canterbury.

[3] The text was supplied from an old MS. by Tischendorf to Winer (*Realwörterb.* I. 576).

somewhat curly. His eyebrows were black and not very arched. His eyes tawny-coloured and flashing. He resembled His forefather David, who was ruddy (πυῤῥάκης), with beautiful eyes.[1] His face resembled His mother's, and was slightly flushed, indicating dignity, wisdom, and unruffled gentleness. In all respects He reflected closely the semblance of His mother."

Such is the fundamental conception which passed across the threshold of the Middle Ages, and has been preserved to the times of the dogmatic writers of the Lutheran Church. Among these J. B. Carpzov in 1777 reopened the pages of these old descriptions, "with all the old interest, but only half of the old belief."

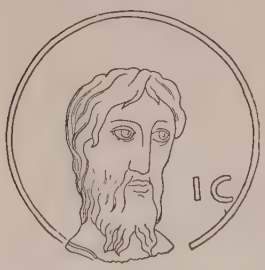
[1] 1 Sam. xvi. 12: πυῤῥάκης μετὰ κάλλους ὀφθαλμῶν καὶ ἀγαθὸς ὁράσει Θεῷ. LXX. Rufus et pulcher aspectu decorâque facie. Vulg.

III.

ATTEMPTED PORTRAITS OF CHRIST.

"Ma dice nel pensier, fin che si mostra;
Signor mio, Gesù Cristo, Dio verace,
Or fu sì fatta la sembianza vostra?"
—DANTE, *Parad.* XXXI. 106–108.

ALTHOUGH, as we have seen, the early Christians regarded with extreme disfavour all endeavours to delineate Christ directly as He was, — although they even looked on such attempts as illegal and profane, — such feelings were gradually overborne by the natural longing of mankind for visible presentations of One Whom they reverenced and adored. That such a longing was but natural is freely admitted by St. Augustine.



Mosaic of Christ (?) First Century.

Accordingly, there are some imaginary portraits of Christ which are assigned to a very early date. In the loss of all tradition, they could not be other than imaginary.

The first woodcut is from a mosaic found in the Catacombs, which Aringhi assigns to the first century. There is no proof that it is intended for our Lord at all, and I must confess entire

Catacomb of St. Callistus. Figures painted in a circle were called *imagines clipeatae.*

scepticism as to the early dates attributed to it, and to some others of these ancient pictures.[1]

The second is the famous picture in the Catacomb of St. Callistus. It has now practically perished; it is, at any rate, almost indistinguishable.

The next is also from the same catacomb, and from the cubiculum of St. Cecilia. The nimbus, the deteriorating art, and the overloaded ornament, prove conclusively that it is not older than the fourth century.

The fourth is from the Catacomb of St. Pontianus.

The next is from an ivory, perhaps of the early part of the fifth century, in the Vatican Museum.

It will be observed that all these are bearded, but all are meant to be beautiful, and to retain some of the charm visible in the pictures of the Good Shepherd. The ugly, bearded type of Byzantine and later Roman art, with great Eastern eyes, black and fixed, and vague, of which the expression became more stern and more repellent, only began to appear as the evil ages of barbarism, turbulence, and misery rolled on their dreary course.[2]

[1] We must always bear in mind the warning of Didron: "Ces monumens sont de dates très contestées et très contestables" (*Icon. Chrét.* 254).

[2] Lafenestre, p. 26.

We may observe, generally, that the representations of Christ follow three predominant types: —

1. The earlier, which is youthful and beautiful, is especially found in the type of the Good Shepherd. It is remarkable that in the various Acts of the Martyrs, where visions of Christ are recorded, He is always described as "*juvenis*," or "*vultu juvenili*." [1]

2. The second type is full-grown, with short beard, but noble and dignified.

3. The Byzantine type represents Jesus as aged, worn, and weary, with suffering mien and deep-set eyes, of which a specimen has been given from an ancient ivory. It frequently recurs in the mosaics.[2]

[1] Ruinart, 92, 211.

[2] See Kraus, *Real. Encykl.* II. 24–26. He gives a long list of examples. Whatever may have been the influence of Pagan Art, it is certain that the later representations were in nowise affected by statues of Æsculapius or Jupiter.

IV.

MOSAICS.

"Toute la richesse dont l'art Chrétien dispose il la réserve pour l'intérieur des sanctuaires." — PÉRATÉ, *L'Arch. Chrét.*, 178.

As the art of fresco declined after the Peace of the Church in the days of Constantine, the art of mosaic rose into splendour. It seems to have started into vigorous life in the fourth century.[1] The presentation of sacred subjects by mosaic-work must be largely controlled by the stubborn nature of the material, and we need do little more than glance at this branch of early Christian Art.

The object of a mosaic is to be effective at a distance as a mural decoration. It neglected small details, and placed strong colours side by side. The figures stood out on backgrounds of blue and intense gold, and were depicted in vivid hues; often they were even surrounded by a black line to emphasize the contours.[2]

Mosaics were used to a small extent in the Catacombs to decorate more than one arcosolium. Boldetti found fragments of stone and glass in the cemeteries of Callistus, of Prætextatus, and of St. Agnes. But most of these mosaics have entirely perished. Little is left before the fourth century but a single cock which once decorated the tomb of a martyr.[3]

In the fourth century mosaics were fixed in the floor of a catacomb discovered in 1838, and said to have been

[1] Kugler, I. 20.

[2] Bayet, p. 60.

[3] Boldetti, p. 210; Aringhi, II. 614; Perret, IV. Pl. VII. 3. It is given in Martigny, s.v. *Coq*.

founded by the Empress Helena. The first basilicas which were decorated with mosaics were those of St. Peter and St. Sylvester; and Constantine employed mosaicists at Constantinople and Jerusalem.[1] The Greek influence was predominant in mosaics from their earliest origin.

Wounded and nimbus-bearing lamb.
Sixth century.

From the fifth century date some of the superb and deeply interesting mosaics at Ravenna, in the mausoleum of Galla Placidia, the Church of SS. Celsus and Nazarus, and in some of the churches at Rome. At this epoch, Christ was frequently represented in the central apses as a crowned lamb, a symbol which afterwards became so common that, as we shall see, the Quinisext Council discouraged

[1] The Church of St. Constantia, at Rome, was decorated with mosaics soon after the Edict of Milan (A.D. 313). At that time there was a sort of classic revival in Christian Art, so that some have supposed that the Church was once a temple of Bacchus. The following dates may be useful. Fourth century — Church of St. Pudentiana: —

A.D.
402. Honorius transfers to Ravenna the capital of the Empire.
410. Capture of Rome by Alaric.
440. Mosaics of Sta. Maria Maggiore.
451. Mosaics of tomb of Galla Placidia.
455. Capture of Rome by Genseric the Vandal.
465. Mosaics of Baptistery of St. John Lateran.
476. Capture of Rome by Odoacer the Goth, and end of Western Empire.
530. Mosaics of SS. Cosmo and Damian.
539. Recapture of Ravenna from the Ostrogoths by Belisarius.
Sixth century Mosaics of S. Apollinare Nuova (570), and in Classe (about 567), and of San Vitalis at Ravenna.
717–842. Struggles against Iconoclasts.
729. Letter of Gregory II. to Leo the Isaurian.

it.[1] The symbol was suggested by the Apocalypse: "The darkness and suffering of the times on earth seem to have forced men to seek comfort in imagination of the glories of the world to come." [2]

To the sixth century belong the mosaics at Ravenna, in the churches of St. Apollinaris and St. Vitalis, founded by Justinian, A.D. 541; and at Rome in the Church of SS. Cosmo and Damian (A.D. 530). Those in the St. Sophia, at Constantinople, have perished.[3]

Brilliantly coloured copies from the ancient mosaics representing Christ may be seen in Mr. Heaphy's *Likeness of Christ*, edited for the S.P.C.K. by Mr. Wyke Bayliss. It should, however, be remembered that most of them are restorations. "The drawing," he says (p. 73), "was always faulty, the arrangement of the groups formal, and too exactly balanced, the attitudes stiff, and often repeated; but for grandeur of the original conceptions, for harmony and gorgeousness of colour, and often for intense power of expression, many of these productions have never been surpassed." He further notices that one main type of features is given to our Lord in all the great mosaics, and that the latter and softer type originates with the Italian Renaissance, and perhaps in part from a desire to make the face of the Saviour reflect that of His Virgin Mother.

Augustine tells us that, even in his day, there were "innumerable" varying portraits of Christ, and that only one of these could possibly resemble Him. It matters not, therefore, he says, how we imagine His mortal aspect, so long as we believe in His miraculous Incarnation.[4]

[1] In the Transfiguration of S. Apollinare in Classe, Peter and James and John are represented by three sheep gazing at a cross.

[2] Rev. R. St. J. Tyrwhitt, *Art Teaching*, 146. "In the larger basilicas, where a transept is introduced before the apsis, it is divided from the nave by a large arch called the Arch of Triumph. In this case the subjects from the Apocalypse were usually introduced upon this Arch." Kugler, I. 24.

[3] Many specimens are given by Ciampini, *Vetera Monumenta*, Rome, 1696.

[4] Aug. *De Trin.* VIII. 4.

V.

YOUTHFUL AND BEARDED PICTURES OF CHRIST.

"Such as in His face,
Youth smiled celestial."

— MILTON.

DOWN to the fourth century Christ is usually represented as young, smiling, radiantly beneficent, a "gracious boy of fifteen, with sweet and rounded figure, resplendent with blooming youth." He is thus represented on the sarcophagi of the fourth century. Although the ministry of Jesus began at the age of thirty, in all the early representations of His miracles He is depicted rather as a boy than as a man. The figure of the bearded Christ came later, and the two are often seen in juxtaposition as on the sarcophagus of Junius Bassus, shewing clearly that in each representation a symbol was involved. This symbolism is indicated on a fine ivory of the eleventh century in the Royal Library at Paris. On one side we see a Christ youthful, beardless, and beautiful, seated in glory in a *vesica piscis* with the scroll of the law in His left hand, and giving the benediction with His right; while on the obverse we have a Christ, bearded and suffering on the cross.[1] The youthful Christ is the divine Christ, the same yesterday, to-day, and forever; the bearded and worn Christ is the human sufferer.

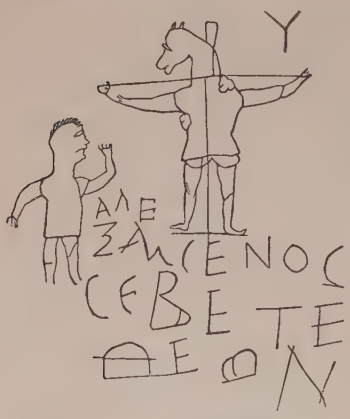
[1] This ivory is given in Didron, *Icon.*, pp. 276–278. He says: "C'est ainsi que Jésus apparait sculpté sur les sarcophages, peint sur les fresques et dans les mosaiques. Jésus est un beau jeune homme de vingt ans; un gracieux adolescent de quinze sans barbe, la figure ronde et douce, tout resplendissant d'une jeunesse divine."

The youthful representation is by far the most common from the second to the tenth century. But at that dreadful epoch all men thought that the second Advent was at hand, and many bequeathed their lands to the Church on their deathbeds "*appropinquante fine mundi.*" A sombre shadow fell over all religion. The Good Shepherd had ceased to represent the main thoughts about the Lord. Jesus is no longer the loving and altogether lovely, who "went about doing good," but sad and wrathful, stern and avenging, who hurls ten thousand thunders in His wrath against the wicked, and whose very sufferings call for vengeance rather than plead for pity on behalf of mankind. On the sarcophagi, frescoes and mosaics of the earlier centuries, the Christian artists set forth thousands of times His miracles of mercy, but they did not proceed so far as His passion. They never represent the agony in the Garden, and in the scenes of His last hours they stop short at the point where Pilate washed his hands.[1] In the tenth century and later all is reversed. Christ is neither the Fair Shepherd nor the Good Physician, but the bleeding Victim or the inexorable Judge. The boyish face which smiles on us in the Catacombs has altogether disappeared. In the Middle Ages — and specially when men were affected by the view that Christ never laughed, which appears in the letter of the Pseudo-Lentulus — the smiling Son of Mary is all but unknown. Christianity has passed its radiant spring, and entered on its dark and stormy autumn. The Orpheus of the Catacombs has given place to the *Rex tremendæ Majestatis.* In the Greek pictures on Mount Athos He is represented as coming out of a surge of vengeful flame, and He sits, Mahomet-like, with a book in one hand and a drawn sword in the other. Such feelings culminate in the Sistine Judgment by Michael Angelo. What an abyss of altered sentiment divides that tumultuous and tempestuous figure from

[1] It is remarkable that in the long series of mosaics at St. Apollinaris in Ravenna, the Crucifixion is deliberately passed over.

the ideal of Christ as it presented itself to the earlier centuries![1]

In a later section of this book the reader will be able to see specimens of the treatment of the Life of Christ in the Catacombs after the accession of Constantine, and down to the epoch of fixed Byzantinism in Art.



Pagan caricature. Kircher Museum.

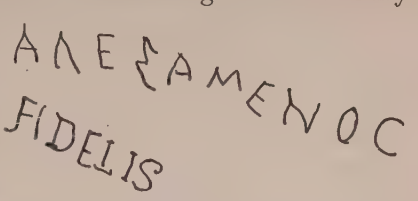
It will be observed that among them all there is no Crucifixion, no representation of Christ in anguish. The earliest allusion to the Crucifixion — if it be an allusion, for this is highly disputable — is the insulting *graffito* scrawled on a wall of the Gelotian House under the Palatine. It is perhaps as old as the second century, and represents a man adoring a crucified figure with an ass's head, with the inscription "Alexamenos adores his god." We know from Tertullian that the Christians were accused of worshipping a figure with an ass's head to which was given the name of "the god Onokoites." In his address to the Nations (I. 14) he says that an infamous and apostate Jew had published a caricature against the Christians. It had ass's ears, and one foot was a hoof; it was clad in a toga, and had a book in its hand. It is only in some respects that the Gelotian

Caricature on a gem.

[1] See Didron, *Icon.*, pp. 257–269. He mentions as an exception the Beau Dieu de Rheims in the thirteenth century, but he says that Rheims has an altogether exceptional history abounding in peculiarities.

graffito, which was discovered in 1856, and is now in the Collegio Romano, resembles the figure which Tertullian describes.[1]

Many have supposed that the insulting scrawl is really aimed at some worshipper of Anubis,[2] but this does not seem probable. In another chamber was found, by Visconti in 1870, the very interesting inscription, "Alexamenos is faithful," as though the brave neophyte was in nowise cowed by the insult of his heathen comrades.



[1] See De Rossi, *Bulletin*, 1864, p. 72. Stefanone, *Gemmae*, Venice, 1644, *tab.* 30.

[2] The Christians were called *Asinarii*, and the Jews were also accused by the heathen of worshipping an ass, which was mixed up with legends of their history. Tac. *Hist.* V.; Plut. *Sympos.* IV. 5. 2; Diod. Sic. XXXIV. from *Jos. c. Ap.* II. 7. As regards the Christians, see Tert. *c. Natt.* I. 14; *Apol.* XVI.; Min. Fel. *Oct.* 9. 28. See Martigny, s.v. *Calomnies;* Mamachi, *Aut. Christ.* I. 130. *Dict. Christ. Autt.* s.v. *Asinarii.* Renan, *L'Antechrist*, p. 40.

Book III.

FROM BYZANTINE ART TO THE RENAISSANCE.

"We can only discern spiritual nature so far as we are like it."

I.

BYZANTINE ART.

"Artes desidia perdidit, et quoniam animorum imagines non sunt, negliguntur etiam corporum." — PLIN. *H. N.* XXXV. 2.

"A mes yeux la pensée disciplinée ne vaut pas la pensée libre. Ce que j'aperçois à travers une œuvre d'art comme à travers toute œuvre, c'est l'état de l'âme qui l'a produite."—RIO.

No definite date can be assigned for the beginning of Byzantine Art, which is the name given to the special development of Art in the Eastern Empire, and at its capital, Byzantium, from the fifth century onwards. It is difficult to distinguish between Byzantine Art and the later art of the West, and it is assumed, rather than proved, by Didron that some of the Italian mosaics (those of St. Vitalis at Ravenna) were the work of Greek monks from Mount Athos.

"But after the seventh century," says Kugler, "there occurred a division in the schools of painting. Those artists who persevere exclusively in the old track may be observed to sink into barbaric ignorance of form, while, on the other hand, for mosaics and all kinds of decorative work, the style and material of Byzantine Art came into vogue. The more important Italian works of the seventh and later centuries follow the Byzantine style, while the lesser class of works (such as miniatures) seem occasionally at least to run wild in an utter license of style which may be called Longobardian. Yet in these apparently formless productions of conventionality, as opposed to the more Byzantine rigorism, there lay a germ of freedom from which a new development was to spring."

Byzantine Art assumed its fixed peculiarities in the Eastern Empire during the reign of Justinian (A.D. 527–565). Byzantium was undisturbed by barbarian invasion, and Art was encouraged by the Court and by the Church. Its strength lay in its adhesion to the same old classic traditions which had inspired the early artists of the Catacombs, and which in time brought back the great painters of the Renaissance to skilful naturalism as well as to noble idealization. Its utter weakness lay in the lack of spontaneity and progress. This was due to ecclesiastical tyranny in an empire in which literature was dead, and liberty undreamed of.

An important moment in the history of Art was produced by the Council of Constantinople, held in 691. It is called the *Quinisext Council*, because it was in some sort supplementary to the Fifth and Sixth Councils of Constantinople, in which no canons of discipline were passed. It is better known as the *Council in Trullo*, because it was held in the *trullus* or domed chapel of the palace. The 82d of its 102 canons, in direct antithesis to the spirit of the old canon of the Council of Elvira (about A.D. 300), decreed "that henceforth Christ was to be publicly exhibited (*ἀναστηλοῦσθαι*) *in the figure of a man, not of a lamb.*" After vindicating the beauty of the old symbol as a sort of adumbration of the truth, and as indicating "the Lamb of God who taketh away the sins of the world," the assembled Fathers decreed that henceforth the *picture* is to supersede the *emblem*, that "we may be led to remember Christ's conversation in the flesh, and His passion, and saving death, and the redemption which He wrought for the world."[1] "Patres voluerunt *cessare typos*," says Caranzas, "praesente veritate."

At the same time, and for the same reasons, they forbade the painting of the Holy Spirit as a dove, and of the Magi under the symbol of a star.

This decree shewed a twofold reversal of ancient feeling.

[1] Labbe, *Concilia*, VI. 1124.

It marked the final evaporation of all trace of the old reserve which Christians had felt in figuring the Person of Christ; and, at the same time, it indicated as fit themes for Art those sufferings in the flesh, from the representations of which the Christians of the earlier centuries had shrunk as from a profanation. Both tendencies were further emphasized in the letter addressed in 729[1] by Pope Gregory II. to Leo the Isaurian. In this famous document the Pope speaks of the scenes of Christ's Passion — His *παθήματα* — as subjects which may and ought to be depicted on the walls of churches. Up to that time the best ancient feeling both of Pagans and Christians had been in favour of repose and beauty as alone suitable to Art. The faces in the early Catacombs, even when a little sad, are always tender and peaceful. Martyrdoms were never painted even amid the tombs of martyrs. In spite of feeble technique, the imperishable reminiscence of beauty survived in the young, noble, radiant figures there portrayed. "Everywhere in the realm of terror were images of joy and hope. It took several centuries for the Italian imagination, amid the misery of barbarian invasions, to reconcile itself to terrible figures and blood-stained scenes." The true ancestors of Giotto, Masaccio, Fra Angelico, and Raphael precede the long night of ignorance and woe. They sleep in those abandoned cemeteries in which painting and all the other arts seemed to have been buried under ruins and despair.

Leo the Isaurian, known as the Iconoclast, "a martial peasant," stung by the taunts levelled at the Christians by Jews and Mahometans, wished to suppress by an imperial edict (A.D. 726) the adoration of pictures, and ordered that they should be hung so high that no one could kiss or worship them. In 728 he tried to forbid them altogether. This attempt awoke the fury of the monks, of women, and of the mob, and Pope Gregory II. put himself at the head of the opposition. The revolt broke out when a crowd of women flung down the imperial officer whom Leo had

[1] This is the date given by Muratori.

ordered to remove a much-venerated figure of Christ, which hung over the gate of the imperial palace.

Constantine V., son of Leo, came to the throne in 741, and then Byzantine Art produced its martyrs. At a council in 754, after six months' deliberation, pictures were declared by the 338 bishops of his party to be "a blasphemy against the fundamental dogma of our salvation, the Incarnation of Christ," and it was asserted that "for lucre the soiled hands of artists debased Christ's Majesty." Painting even of saints and of the Virgin was declared to be a reversion to Pagan image worship. Leo IV. (775–780) was less fanatical; and in the Second Council of Nice, 787, the Empress Irene caused the decree of 754 to be revoked, and the assembled Fathers once more permitted the multitude to kiss images and pictures and prostrate themselves before them. Leo the Armenian (813–820) again favoured the Iconoclasts, and Theophilus (829–832) even endeavoured to close all monasteries.[1] His widow Theodora, as regent for his son (who was only three years old), founded the "Feast of Orthodoxy" in honour of the restoration of images and their worship.[2]

Iconoclasm lasted for more than a century. The furious Council of 842 held at Constantinople marked its final ruin. Iconoclasm was anathematized, and the decrees of the Second Council of Nice, which had in 787 definitely sanctioned pictures and images, were confirmed. At this epoch "the last relics of freedom and nature disappeared from Byzantine works." At the same time scenes of martyrdom and of Christ's sufferings first began to be generally introduced. This closes the period of early Christian Art.[3] Henceforth we begin to find "rigid figures of a stern and repellent Christ, in the midst of hideous passions, and abominable

[1] The monk Lazarus became, in this reign, a martyr of religious art. He continued to paint pictures for adoration in spite of having been beaten almost to death, and his hands maimed by red-hot iron.

[2] See Gibbon, IV. 468–477; Bayet, *L'Art Byzantin*, 108–113.

[3] Labbe, *Concilia* VII. 833.

martyrdoms, set forth with savage brutality by feelingless barbarians."[1] How different are these from the sweet, familiar, hopeful scenes of miracle and of mercy which inspired the artists of the Catacombs!

But if the Church gave a new motive and impulse to Art by sanctioning subjects which the feelings of Christians had hitherto forbidden, or severely limited, on the other hand she paralyzed the further *progress* of Art by a severe control. She insisted that henceforth sacred Art should not be natural, but traditional, hieratic, and conventional. Hence the study of nature ceased, and Painting first became stereotyped, and then declined. Technical skill was regarded as more than sufficient, and mechanical reproductions took the place of free and imaginative treatment. The chief thing which attracted admiration and received reward was gorgeous colouring and the lavish expenditure of gold in the background and accessories. In the Second Nicene Council (A.D. 787) images had been expressly defended on the ground that neither invention (ἐφεύρεσις) nor composition (διάταξις) were allowed to the painter, but only manual skill (τέχνη), under stringent obedience to the dictation of the clergy and what they laid down as the rule and tradition (θεσμοθεσία καὶ παράδοσις) of the Catholic Church.[2]

The Church would never have ventured thus to dictate to Art in the days of its living impulses; or if she had done so, would have been deservedly defeated, for mistaking her

[1] Lafenestre, p. 37. The earliest known painting of a crucifixion is in a Syriac Gospel, which may be seen in the Laurentian Library at Florence, written by the priest Rabula in 586 at the monastery of St. John Zagba in Mesopotamia. The Crucifixion could not be painted until (among other changes) the punishment had been abolished and the classic feeling had utterly died out. A copy of this illumination is given *infra*, p. 355.—Woltmann and Woermann, *History of Painting*, I. 196.

[2] Byzantine Art seems to have had only two reviving impulses before it entered on its long senescence. One was in the ninth century; another, a very brief one, at the time of the Crusades.—Bayet, *L'Art Byzantine*, 117.

duty and message. She attempted in later ages even in the West to make painters feel the weight of her control, but by no means with success. Three splendid pictures — the great *Assumption of the Virgin* by Sandro Botticelli now in the National Gallery, the *Annunciation* by Timoteo Viti at Milan, and the *Marriage of Cana in Galilee* by Paul Veronese — incurred the displeasure of clerics and inquisitors. The former picture was supposed to teach an heretical view of the relation of men to angels; the second was absurdly interpreted as a reflexion on Christ's immaculate conception; the latter did undoubtedly introduce trivial accessories into a sacred theme. But later priestly interferences had no influence whatever on the development of Art, and not one of these pictures was altered by the painters.

i. Under the dominance of priests, Byzantine Art became a thing of trick and mannerism, "a luxuriously conducted handicraft." Absence of thought was concealed by gaudiness and expensiveness of materials. "The haggard, morose figures, with their brick-red and olive-coloured flesh-tones," says Kugler, "look, as may be supposed, only the more wretched on this account." And this style of Art infected and almost dominated the West as well as the East, because artists had well-nigh perished from Italy in the successive storms of barbarian invasion. St. Mark's at Venice (976–1085) is absolutely Byzantine. When Abbot Desiderius (in 1075) restored Monte Cassino, he sent for Byzantine artists. At Rome, however, men still possessed the relics of antiquity. These assert their influence in the twelfth century mosaics, of San Clemente and Santa Maria, in Trastevere, which indicate a certain reaction against Byzantine dogmatism.[1] But in the Eastern Empire the inheritance of antiquity was exhausted and was unfructified by the spirit of new work. To this day at Mount Athos, and in Russia, sacred Art remains at exactly the same stage as in the days of Justinian, except

[1] Bayet, *L'Art Byzantine*, 105.

that it becomes ever more and more soulless and mechanical. These arrested types, this fidelity to a few dominant conceptions, may have a conventional sacredness, but the pictures which crowd Greek churches can be turned out by the thousand without the slightest expenditure of thought and effort.[1] Painting, such as it is, has sunk into a manual mechanism, because it has been reduced for many centuries to an inflexible system. Its entire method and treatment was laid down in the *Explanation of Painting* (Ἑρμηνεία τῆς ζωγραφικῆς) drawn up by Dionysius, a monk of Furna d'Agrapha, in the fifteenth century, in accordance with the practice of the monkish artist Manuel Panselinos. It has been published by Didron under the title of *Manuel d'Iconographie Chrétienne*, from a manuscript which he obtained at Mount Athos in 1839. The manual is dedicated "to Mary, Mother of God, and ever Virgin," and is a curious sepulchre in which Byzantine Art buried every resemblance to nature and every impulse of originality. The remark made by Pliny the Elder in describing the dying Art of Rome applies no less to the Art of Byzantium, "since artists could no longer paint souls, they neglected also to paint bodies."[2]

ii. Byzantine Art was subjected not only to the benumbing touch of conventionality dictated by ignorant ecclesiastics, but also to the paralyzing curse of an unnatural, unscriptural, and destructive asceticism. The chief painters were not simply monks, but monks utterly perverted from the gladness and simplicity of the Gospel by the imaginary merits of an enfeebling self-maceration. Asceticism, as understood by the Hermits, Stylites, and many classes of coenobites, was the pernicious caricature of the virtue of habitual temperance. It was directly injurious to the very self-control which it was supposed to foster. It reduced life to a paralysis of useless misery. It degraded the body; it weakened the will; it poisoned the imagination; it damped the spirit; it increased to fury the stings

[1] Lafenestre, p. 43.

[2] Plin. *H.N.* XXXV. 2.

of animal passion. So far from weakening the force of carnal temptation, it increased it tenfold, and no one can read the lives of the more extravagant ascetics, with the vast space occupied in them by struggles against man's lower nature, without seeing that they had ignorantly intensified their own moral hindrances, and rendered life for themselves more difficult and less blessed. The simplest knowledge of physiology would have taught them that the way to conquer impulse is to empty the soul of evil imaginations by filling it with active graces; and that the surest course to render appetite intractable was morbidly to brood upon it in the disorders of a weakened frame. Asceticism itself never made a single saint. If some saints grew up under its unnatural tension, more saints and better ones would have grown up had the same sincerity and self-denial been applied with greater wisdom. And certainly asceticism made many frightful sinners, as may be sufficiently proved by overwhelming evidence from the days of St. Jerome to those of St. Peter Damiani, and from his days down to our own. Francis of Assisi, before he died, saw the error of unnatural self-torment, and said, "I have sinned against my brother the ass." The poor Curé d'Ars spoke of himself as "this corpse." To regard the body at all as "*ce cadavre*" is an absolute perversion. It is not a corpse, but the shrine of noble life; not a tomb, but a temple. If ascetics were ignorant of the simplest laws of nature, they might have read in their Bibles the warning of St. Paul that ordinances of "touch not, taste not, handle not," referring as they do to mere material and perishable matters, after the precepts and doctrines of men, "have indeed a show of wisdom in will-worship, and humility, and severity to the body; but are *not* of any value against the indulgence of the flesh."[1]

In the wake of this unnatural and unscriptural asceti-

[1] Col. ii. 23. The Revised Version first enabled English readers to attach any intelligible meaning to this passage, and to grasp its needful warning against mere outward austerities.

cism came pride, arrogance, boundless ambition, intense self-will, intolerable bigotry and bitterness, narrow exclusiveness, immense self-assertion, and all those symptoms of a perverted, sacerdotal, and formalizing religionism, which have ever proved themselves to be the curse of nations, and the subversion of the pure and wholesome Gospel of Jesus Christ. And, among other things, asceticism helped to ruin Art. "In the types," says Professor Woltmann, "everything has given way to typical blankness. The charm of youth, the grace of womanhood, the energy and resolve of manhood, have disappeared.[1] The solemn figures of saints appear with gloomy and morose countenances, devoid of all true human feeling; in the phrase of Kugler, 'incapable of any exercise of moral will'; until at last ideal sainthood is travestied in the murky nightmares of *Zurbaran*. The glorious classic type is swallowed up in ugliness. The forehead is high, bald, and often deeply wrinkled,[2] the eyes fixed, staring, and in course of time mere ugly slits. The nose is long and broad, the lights on forehead and cheekbone stand abruptly out. The mouth is small, but without vivacity, without the charms of a mouth that can speak; the underlip is pushed up with an expression full of arrogance.'"[3] "It is curious to remark," says Kugler, "how one portion of the figure after another now became rigid — the joints, the extremities, and at last even the countenance, which assumed a morose, stricken expression. . . . The figures are long and meagre, the action stiff and angular, hands and feet attenuated and powerless. . . . The Byzantine artist was

[1] A religion which neglects or crushes the inherent and God-given sense of beauty must be tainted with corruption. Lessing truly says: "Nur die missverstandene Religion kann uns von dem schönen entfernen, und es ist ein Beweis für die richtig verstandene wahre Religion, wenn sie uns überall auf das schöne zurüchführt."

[2] "A deep, unhappy line, in which ill-humour seems to have taken up its permanent abode, extends from brow to brow, beneath the bald and heavily wrinkled forehead." — Kugler, I. 53.

[3] Woltmann and Woermann, I. 230.

opposed to the usual enjoyments of life. His art partakes of the same feeling, inasmuch as he substitutes his individual ideal for that which is universal in human nature."[1]

Byzantinism, then, — which reflects the consequences of clerical dominance over Art, — means a sudden arrest of all spontaneity of genius, a stereotyped nullity, or frost-bound superstition. It paralyzed both the power and the joy of Art. It degraded the treatment, and filled the subjects so treated with horror and misery. In the early days of Christianity the artists had felt themselves drawn to all that was sweet, pure, peaceful, and tender. Painting delighted in flowers, and trees, and spring, and still waters. It delighted to paint heaven as a lovely garden wherein happy souls wandered amid green pastures in the Paradise of joy, by the waters of Comfort, whence grief, and groaning, and sorrow are banished far. The creeping atrophy of ecclesiastical usurpation, tainted by a morbid asceticism, abolished all this natural gladness, and brought into its place an unnatural ugliness, and an unspiritual gloom. Byzantine sacerdotalism seems utterly to have lost sight of the truth that the kingdom of God is peace and joy in the Holy Ghost.

[1] Kugler, *Handbook of Painting*, 3d ed. I. 20.

II.

MARGARITONE OF AREZZO (A.D. 1216–1293).

"Margaritone of Arezzo,
With the grave-clothes garb, and swaddling barret, —
Why purse up mouth and beak in a pet so,
You bald, old, saturnine, poll-clawed parrot? —
Not a poor, glimmering Crucifixion,
Where in the foreground kneels the donor?"

— BROWNING.

BYZANTINE painting, long doomed to sterility by a pedantic tyranny, and to ugliness by a slavish maltreatment of the body, lived on as a purely mechanical art, which could derive no fresh breath of inspiration, because all appeal to nature was suppressed. It was only nourished — if a mummy can be said to be nourished — by old traditions. No true artist can work under dictation or in chains. Yet Byzantine Art survived in its bedridden impotence for nearly a millennium, and it still multiplies its interminable nullities in the Eastern Church.

Even Italian Art until the thirteenth century was more or less under the tyranny of the Byzantine method and tradition. But the Western artist always possessed and claimed the power to introduce at least some marks of individuality, if not into the general outlines of the composition, at least into detail and expression.

We are so fortunate as to possess in our almost unrivalled National Gallery an Italian painting which may be taken to represent the all but expiring grasp of Byzantinism on the free artistic life of the West.[1] It is the *Virgin*

[1] Nat. Gall. No. 1149.

and Child, with scenes from the lives of the Saints, by Margaritone of Arezzo, and is his most important work. It is painted, as Vasari says, *alla Greca*, and is the more precious as being probably the best characteristic effort of a painter, architect, and sculptor, most of whose other paintings have perished at Arezzo, and also at Rome where he decorated the old portico of St. Peter's for Urban IV. It is signed "Margarit de Aritio me fecit."

Margaritone di Magnano was born in 1216, about twenty-four years before Cimabue, with whom he was acquainted, but by whose great movement he was uninfluenced. Vasari says that he died at the age of seventy-seven, weary of life (*infastidito*), because he had outlived the ideals of his youth, and saw them superseded by new methods which overleapt the sacred barriers of traditionalism. Indeed, he regarded those new methods as a sacrilege in Art, no less culpable than heresy in dogma.[1] Poor Margaritone need not, however, have been so much disheartened. It is never the exquisite loveliness of some Raphaelesque Madonna that the multitudes adore as sacred. It is invariably some swarthy relic of Byzantine Art on gold ground and in glaring colours. There still exists in the Museum at Berlin a Pietà[2] by no less an artist than Giovanni Bellini, which for devotional purposes has absolutely been *repainted* into the Byzantine style. Byzantine ideals were alone called "*sacred pictures*" by the populace, and "to this day in Naples a lemonade-seller will allow none but a Byzantine Madonna with olive-green complexion and veiled head to be painted up in his booth."[3] "We here stand," says Kugler, "upon ground to which Titian and Ribera with all their influence have never penetrated."

[1] Rio, *De l'Art Chrétien*, I. 26.

[2] Monkhouse, *The Italian Pre-Raphaelites*, p. 9. The name, *Pietà*, is given to representations of the dead Christ, mourned by his mother.

[3] La fidélité à des types arrêtés, à des conceptions maîtresses et peu nombreuses est un trait commun à toutes les religions." — Bayet, p. 105.

VIRGIN AND CHILD, WITH SCENES FROM THE LIVES OF THE SAINTS. *Margaritone.*

From the Picture in the National Gallery, London.

Even Guido, long after the Renaissance had achieved its most splendid triumphs, admitted with true instinct that neither he, nor any painter of his age, could really equal the superhuman characteristics of modesty and holiness which the prayer, the holiness, and the devout intensity of Lippo di Dalmasio — known as Lippo of the Madonnas — put into pictures which are but infantile in capacity, and fail entirely to express human beauty.[1] No one would pause before the finest Madonna of Guido and say that it touched his heart, as Clement VIII. said of Lippo's picture in the Church of San Procolo in Bologna. Guido himself used to stand entranced before this ancient daub, and attribute its spell to some secret inspiration which he could not catch.

Margaritone's picture is exactly one of those which we see visitors to the National Gallery pass with contemptuous indifference. Their disdain would be changed into eager interest if they knew its preciousness in the history of Art. It is painted in tempera on linen cloth stretched over wood[2] and was meant far less to please than to teach, far less to be admired than to be adored. The design of the painter was to "express fixed and unalterable truth by fixed and unalterable images."

The Virgin is not a mortal woman, but a type of the "Mother of God." She sits motionless, in a richly embroidered robe, on a throne of which the arms are, probably for some symbolic reason, supported by highly conventional lions. Her head-dress is surrounded by fleurs-de-lys, the symbols of light and purity. Her hair, as in all the earlier religious pictures, is entirely covered. For the Virgin to shew her hair, and for an artist to paint it, would have been regarded as a profanation. Evil

[1] We have one Madonna by the Bolognese painter, Lippo dalle Madonne (1376–1410) in our National Gallery, No. 725.

[2] Margaritone is the probable author of the great invention of painting on prepared canvas, of which this picture furnishes evidence. (Poynter, *Italian Painting*, p. 59.)

Spirits (*shedîm*) were supposed at once to take their seat on any woman's uncovered head, and in all public places she was to keep her head covered "because of the angels."[1] A Byzantine painter would have been utterly shocked by the Madonnas and Magdalenes painted with flowing and dishevelled tresses which were so greatly admired after the Renaissance. Her feet are, as a matter of course, hidden beneath the folds of her long robe. To shew them in the picture would have been deemed irreverent.

Her look is far away, and not of earth. Her emotionless and inexpressive face is an attribute of majesty too lofty to be shadowed forth except in symbols. That the rendering of expression was not beyond the painter's power we see in the looks of astonishment, of earnestness, even of triumph and of alarm, which he paints on the faces of the executioners and saints in the scenes on either side.

The Child is not a child, but a small man. This was not because the representation of childhood exceeded the artist's skill, but because to represent the Saviour as a child at all seemed to be an irreverent naturalism.[2] He is robed in symmetrical drapery. His right hand is uplifted

[1] For a full account of this curious Eastern superstition, with many Rabbinic and other illustrations, see my *Life of St. Paul*, I. 639 (Exc. IV.).

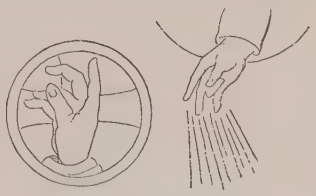
[2] "The humanity of Christ is not yet awhile even hinted at, His divinity alone being insisted on. This, then, is the reason why the young God is here represented in the form of a man-child, erect, with the assumed dignity of an adult, as, after the manner of the priests in the Greek Church, He raises His hands to bless the faithful. Mary is here likewise thought of as the Virgin elect of God; not as the Mother of Jesus, the Mother of man's highest humanity.

"Again the world is thought of as a place made hideous with evil, bearing marks of the serpent's trail over all its Eden beauty, where saints are boiled by Pagans, women slain by seducers, children devoured by dragons. By help of such pictured hell-deeds were men taught to loathe this base world, and think on Heaven's bliss." The grotesques in the animals which support the throne are "here introduced as a means of relief from the strained seriousness of life." — A. H. Mackmurdo, *Century Guild Hobby Horse*, I. 23.

in the Greek attitude of benediction; in His left He holds the roll of the Lamb's Book of Life.[1]

The glory with which the Virgin and Child are encircled is the mandorla, or *Vesica piscis*, to recall the mystic Fish. Inside it are two adoring angels. The eagle, the lion, the ox, the man, in the four corners, are the four traditional symbols of the Four Evangelists. On the left is the Nativity and the Annunciation to the Shepherds, followed by various scenes in which Satan is defeated and the saints of Christ delivered. St. John stands unhurt in the caldron of boiling oil; St. Catherine is buried by angels on Mount Sinai; St. Nicolas persuades some sailors to throw into the sea a vase of oil given them by the devil, and on the opposite side saves three innocent men. St. John resuscitates the matron Drusiana of Ephesus; St. Benedict rolls his naked body in the thorns, where now the roses grow; and St. Margaret, by making the sign of the cross, causes the Dragon to burst asunder. The fact that these scenes of horror and martyrdom should have come to be painted at all is in itself characteristic of Byzantine Art. Such scenes were never painted by the early Christians, who, by a fine instinct, were led to avoid all subjects alien from the true peace, repose, and dignity of Art. Asterius, Bishop of Amasæa (A.D. 600), mentions a painting of the martyrdom of St. Euphemia in the fourth century, in the great

[1] The Latin form of benediction with two fingers and the thumb was meant to symbolize the Trinity. In the Greek form of benediction, the extended first finger is meant for I, the middle finger is bent like a C (the ancient form of the Greek Σ); the thumb and ring finger are also rounded into a C, so that the hand symbolizes the word $\overline{IC} \cdot \overline{XC}$, the monogram for Jesus Christ. It may be seen in another late Byzantine picture (N. G. 1014), by Emmanuel, a Greek priest, painted in 1660. There, too, Christ is in the *Ichthys*, or *Vesica piscis*. Didron, *Manuel*, p. 380, E. Tr.; *Iconogr. de Dieu*, p. 202.



Greek form of benediction.

church at Chalcedon, but it must have been an isolated exception.[1] It was not till the eighth or ninth centuries that paintings of anguish and torture began to prevail even in the Byzantine schools.

[1] Asterius, with a play on his name, was quoted as "a bright star" (*astrum*) at the Second Council of Nice.

III.

THE DAWN OF THE RENAISSANCE.

"But at any rate I have loved the season
Of Art's spring-birth so dim and dewy;
My sculptor is Nicolo the Pisan,
My painter — who but Cimabue?"

— BROWNING.

I HAVE already said that I am in no sense of the word attempting to write even the outline of a history of Art; but I must briefly indicate how the long and dreary reign of Byzantinism came to a close.

Mr. Ruskin characterizes as follows the great periods of Art: —

i. The Lombardic Epoch. — The Christianization of the barbaric mind. A period of savage but noble life gradually subjected to law, — the forming of men.

ii. The Gothic Period. — 1200–1400 (Dante, 1300). The period of vital Christianity, the development of the laws of chivalry, and forms of imagination which are founded on Christianity.

In this period you get "the highest development of Italian character and chivalry with an entirely believed Christian religion: you get therefore joy and courtesy and hope and a lovely peace in death. And with these you have two fearful elements of evil. You have first such confidence in the virtue of the creed that men hate and persecute all who do not accept it. And, worse still, you find such confidence in the power of the creed that men not only can do anything that is wrong, and be themselves for a word of faith pardoned, but are even sure that after

the wrong is done God is sure to put it all right again for them, or even make things better than they were before. Now I need not point out to you how the spirit of persecution as well as of vain hope, founded on creed only, is mingled in every line with the lovely moral teaching of the *Divina Commedia;* nor need I point out to you how, between the persecution of other people's creeds and the absolution of one's own crimes, all Christian error is concluded."

iii. The early Renaissance period. — In this epoch "the arts of Greece and some of its religion return and join themselves to Christianity; not taking away its sincerity and earnestness, but making it poetical instead of practical. In the following period even this poetic Christianity expressed by the arts became devoted to the pursuit of pleasure, and in that they persist except where they are saved by a healthy naturalism or domesticity.

"But in this period you get just fifty years of perfect work — the time of the Masters, including Luini, Leonardo, Giovanni Bellini, Carpaccio, Mantegna, Verrocchio, Cima da Conegliano, Perugino and — in date, though only in his earlier life belonging to the school — Raphael. The great fifty years was the prime of life of three men: Giovanni Bellini, b. 1430, d. 1520 (æt. 90); Mantegna, b. 1430, d. 1506 (æt. 76); Carpaccio, d. 1522.

"The great difference between these men and the former school is their desire to make everything dainty and delightful." Take for instance Bellini's *St. Jerome in his study:* "it is all a perfect quintessence of innocent luxury — absolute delight without one drawback in it, no taint of the Devil anywhere."

"It is true that in the following age, founded on the absolutely stern rectitude of this, there came a phase of gigantic power and of exquisite ease and felicity which possess an awe and a charm of their own. They are more inimitable than the work of the perfect school: but they are not *perfect.*"

"Mocking levity and mocking gloom are equally signs of the death of the soul; just as, contrariwise, a passionate seriousness and passionate joyfulness are signs of its full life in works such as those of Angelico, Luini, Ghiberti, or La Robbia."

After Raphael's time artists mainly "sought to paint fair pictures rather than represent stern facts; of which the consequence has been that from Raphael's time to this day, historical Art has been in acknowledged decadence."[1]

It does not here fall into my province to inquire into the historic causes which led to that movement of the human mind we call the Renaissance, or "new birth" of art, of literature, of poetry, of freedom, of genius; they must be sought in professed histories of the subject like those of Burckhardt or Symonds. But many of them are not easily definable; we can only say of them, —

> "There is a day in spring
> When under all the earth the secret germs
> Begin to stir and glow before they bud.
> The wealth and festal growth of midsummer
> Lie in the heart of that inglorious hour,
> Which no man names with blessing though its work
> Is blessed by all the world. Such days there are
> In the slow history of the growth of souls."

CIMABUE is usually accredited with the first decisive and triumphant stride forward in the direction of the emancipation of Art from its unnatural Byzantine trammels. This view has been severely impugned by many recent critics, and must be largely modified,[2] though tradition can scarcely be said to have erred in assigning great importance

[1] *On the Old Road*, I. Pt. II. 661.

[2] Criticising the view that Cimabue may be called "der Stammvater aller italienischer Kunst," Schnaase says: "Bologna, Pisa, Siena, besassen ältere, einheimische, zum Theil mit Mahlernamen bezeichnete Gemälde." *Gesch. der bildenden Künste*, VII. 270. P. Angeli, in 1638, in his *Collis Paradisi amoenitates*, says: "Juncta Pisanus, ruditer a Graecis instructus, primus ex Italis artem apprehendit." One of Giunta Pisano's pictures is dated 1236.

to his influence. With whatever modifications, it must still be admitted that Cimabue stood in the first line of the painters of his time, and was on the whole the chief regenerator of painting in Italy.

Painting, however, received a powerful impulse from sculpture. It was Niccolo Pisano who set the first decisive example of independence. He "suddenly appears in Pisa as one who, rejecting the conventional religious sentiment which had marked his predecessors and contemporaries, revived the imitations of the classic Roman period. He gave new life to an apparently extinct art, and had nothing in common with the men of his time at Pisa but the subjects which he treated." He had derived his sudden inspiration from the sight of a Roman antique. The impulse which began with him in the thirteenth century "consummated itself 300 years afterwards in Raphael and his scholars." Mr. Ruskin speaks with perhaps too passionate a severity of the ultimate consequences of classic influence on Art, but all will admit the general truth of his contention. "Niccolo first among Italians thought mainly, in carving the Crucifixion, not how heavy Christ's head was when He bowed it, but how heavy His body was when people came to take it down. And the apotheosis of flesh . . . went steadily on, until at last it became really of small consequence to the artist of the Renaissance Incarnadine whether a man had his head on or not, so only that his legs were handsome: and the decapitation, whether of St. John or St. Cecilia, the massacre of any quantity of Innocents, the flaying, whether of Marsyas or St. Bartholomew, and the deaths it might be of Adonis by his pig, or it might be of Christ by His people, became, one and all, simply subjects for analysis of muscular mortification; and this vast body of artists accurately therefore, little more than a chirurgically useless set of medical students."

Siena, too, as well as Pisa, Duccio as well as Niccolo, must share with Florence and Cimabue the glory of having initiated the great revival.

Duccio of Buoninsegna (1260–1340), the two great brothers Lorenzetti, and Ugolino, were all distinguished before the close of the first half of the fourteenth century. Of these, Duccio especially was a painter of the highest eminence.[1] Every line of his simple lovely paintings breathes of reverence and love. His *Maestà*, an enthroned Virgin surrounded by many scenes and figures, was painted for the high altar of the Duomo of Siena, and on June 9, 1310, was carried to its destined place in a solemn procession "amidst the clangour of trumpets, drums, and the church bells." The well-known picture of Christ's triumphal entry into Jerusalem was one of the numerous scenes from the life of Christ which were parts of the reverse or the predella of this great picture.

Madonna. (Duccio.)

The accompanying woodcut from the Madonna and Child of Duccio in our National Gallery (No. 566), though it is by no means one of his best pictures, will shew how little he has to fear from comparison with Cimabue. Hitherto the Holy Child had almost invariably been painted in the act of benediction. Here He

[1] In his contract of Oct. 9, 1308, for the Duomo of Siena, he promises "pingere et facere ut Dominus sibi largietur." Milanesi, I. 160. Tura dal Grasso, in an old Sienese chronicle, says *fu la più bella tavola che mai si vedesse.* — Wornum.

is represented as a real child, though, as in all the Byzantine pictures, He is still fully draped; but He wears a sweet and child-like expression, and with a truly infantine gesture He is drawing aside the Virgin's veil. The green faces of the original are due to no fault of the painter, but to the fact that the surface colours over the green ground of the flesh-tints have been worn away.[1] The school of Siena, brilliant and poetic as it was, "received no fresh inspiration from without, and perished incomplete, like Siena herself, from its own ambitious exclusiveness."

The real name of CIMABUE was Cenni. He was born in Florence about 1240.

The fine picture of Sir F. Leighton, *The Procession of Cimabue's Madonna*, illustrates the famous story told by Vasari, that when his Madonna was finished in 1267 it was seen by Charles of Anjou in the painter's bottega, and was carried to its place in the Rucellai Chapel of Santa Maria Novella by the rejoicing citizens of Florence "with the sound of trumpets and other festal demonstrations."[2]

The immense advance made by Cimabue may be expressed in the one word *Naturalism*. He began to modify purely historical symbols, and to substitute for them the representations of things in their true aspect. His object was not merely to paint sermons or doctrines, but to shew men and women more nearly as they are. The increase of skill and the greater joyousness of worship which followed were natural results of this stroke of genius. Immature as the representation of nature still is, we feel at

[1] See Monkhouse, *The Italian Pre-Raphaelites*, p. 13. Duccio also executed designs in chiaroscuro in marble on the pavement of the Duomo, by a process of his own invention. Poynter, *Italian Paintings*, 63.

[2] Vasari is mistaken in saying that the remembrance of their exultant enthusiasm gave the name of the *Borgo Allegri*, or the Joyous Suburb, to the street of Florence down which the procession passed from the painter's house. That quarter received its name from the palace of the Allegri family. But the practice of thus carrying a picture in triumph was not uncommon. The altar-pieces of Duccio and of Lorenzo Lotto received that honour.

once, on comparing Cimabue's Madonna with those of the Byzantine artists, that "he has spoken, not with the thunder of the ecclesiastic to the fear of the layman, but with the voice of a man to the heart of his brother." The Virgin is dressed in the traditional and symbolic colours — a red tunic, the hue of love, and a blue mantle, because blue is the symbol of heaven and hope. She has one golden star on her shoulder and another on the fold of the mantle which covers her hair. Her feet rest on a stool of open-work, and her chair is hung with white draperies flowered in gold and blue. The Child on her knee is dressed in a white tunic, over which is a purple mantle marked with hatchings of gold. The face of the Virgin is sad and solemn, that of the Child is natural and animated. On either side, one over the other, in graceful attitudes, kneel three angels, whose faces are full of spiritual fervour. The picture breathes a sense of peace and love, and the novelty of this method of conceiving so stereotyped a theme was well calculated to inspire a burst of delight and gratitude.[1]

Madonna. (Cimabue.)

[1] "The Madonna of the Rucellai Chapel is still one of the chief objects of pilgrimage of lovers of Art who go to Italy; and it is still hanging, dingy and veiled by the dust of centuries, in the unimposing, almost shabby Chapel of Santa Maria Novella, probably where Dante saw it, its hands scarred by nails to put the *ex votos* on, split its whole length by

The Madonna by Cimabue in our National Gallery (No. 565) is described by Vasari as having been attached to a pilaster in the Church of Santa Croce, at Florence.

Other Madonnas had no doubt led the way in the direction which Cimabue consciously or unconsciously followed. A revival was in the air. There is no absolute discontinuity either in Art or in human life. The same general tendencies produce the same general results. There is a Madonna which indicates the dawn of the Renaissance, and bears a date fifty years earlier than the Madonna of Cimabue. I saw it in Subiaco, but it is too dark to permit an effective photograph. It bears the inscription *Magister Conxolus pinxit MCCXIX.* It hangs on the staircase between the upper and lower church of the Sagro Speco. Owing to the remoteness of the lovely town of Subiaco the picture has been but little noticed. To this unknown master, Conciolo, is also attributed a vigorous little sketch of the boy St. Benedict in his cave, discovered by the priest of Porticara, while from above St. Romanus lets down food to him in a basket.

The life of Cimabue probably covered the years from 1240 to 1302; Duccio was only twenty years younger, and

time's seasoning, and scaled in patches; the white gesso ground shewing through the colour, — so obscured by time that one can hardly see that the Madonna's robe was the canonical blue, the sad mother's face looking out from under the hood, and the pathetic Christ-child blessing the adoring angels at the side. Like all the work of its time, it has a pathos which neither the greater power of modern Art nor the enervate elaborateness of modern purism can ever attain. Something in it, by an inexplicable magnetism, tells of the profound devotion, the unhesitating worship, of the religious painter of that day, of faith and prayer, devotion and worship, forever gone out of Art. And the aroma of centuries of prayer and trust still gives it to me a charm beyond that of Art, — the sacredness which lingers in the eyes which have looked into the sorrows and aspirations of the thousands of unhappy ones who in the past have laid their hearts before the Madonna of the Borgo Allegri." — W. J. Stillman, Coles' *Old Italian Masters*, p. 15. "The delight," says Ruskin, "was not merely in the revelation of an art they had not known how to practise; it was delight in the revelation of a Madonna whom they had not known how to love." — *Mornings in Florence*, II. 48.

seems to have lived until 1339. Duccio was little if at all inferior to Cimabue in charm and greatness. Mosaicists, like Fra Giacomo at Siena, had already pointed to them both the way towards a substitution of *representative* for *conventional* types. The Madonna of Guido of Siena, which was painted in 1229, nineteen years before the birth of Cimabue, "though still Greek, shows a wonderful advance towards the modern style."

IV.

GIOTTO.

"Non meno buon Cristiano che eccellente pittore." — VASARI.

I WILL not touch on the history of the Revival of Art further than to say that the revolution which Cimabue and Duccio more or less established, if they did not inaugurate, was carried to its complete triumph by the genius of GIOTTO BONDONE, son of the peasant of Vespignano.

Mr. Ruskin sums up Giotto's main innovations under the heads of greater lightness of colour, greater breadth of mass, and close imitation of nature. "His first aim," says Lord Lindsay, "was to infuse new life into traditional compositions by substituting the heads, attitudes, and draperies of the actual world for the spectral forms and conventional types of the Byzantine painters"; and his next was "to vindicate the right of modern Europe to think, feel, and judge for herself, to reissue or recoin the precious gold of the past according as the image and superscription are or are not worthy of perusal." He was one of the few great innovators whose genius forced itself into early recognition. All his famous contemporaries, as well as their successors — Petrarca, Boccaccio, Riccobaldo, Villani, Cennini, Leon Alberti — speak of his supremacy. Above all, he enjoyed the friendship of Dante, who aided him with deep and fertile suggestions, and wrote —

> "Once Cimabue seemed to hold full sure
> His own 'gainst all in art, now Giotto bears
> The palm, and this man's fame does that obscure."[1]

[1] Dean Plumptre's translation of

> "Credette Cimbue nella pittura
> Tener lo campo: ed ora ha Giotto il grido
> Si che la fama di colui è oscura." — *Purg.* XI. 93–96.

Giotto, like Cimabue and his predecessors and successors for a full century, was emphatically a devout and religious painter. The art of these painters was wholly devoted to the service of religion. It was indeed from religion that it had received its main impulse. They shared the reviving breath of life and inspiration which had come to the Church from the passionate zeal of St. Dominic and the humble tenderness and self-devotion of St. Francis of Assisi. The popes and the monks were their chief patrons, and sacred places — the Cathedral of Siena the Campo Santo at Pisa, the monastery Church of Assisi, the Brancacci Chapel at Florence — became the chief scenes where the elder painters displayed, and the younger learned, their skill.[1] Of Giotto there cannot remain the smallest doubt that "his mind was one of the most healthy, kind, and active that ever informed a human frame. His love of beauty was entirely free from weakness; his love of truth untinged by severity; his industry constant without impatience; his workmanship accurate without formalism; his temper serene yet playful, and his faith firm without superstition. I do not know," says Mr. Ruskin, "in the annals of Art such another example of happy, practical, unerring, and benevolent power."[2] Vasari, after telling us that he yielded up his soul to God in Florence in 1366, adds that "he was no less a good Christian than an excellent painter."

How deep was the religious feeling of the painters of the Campo Santo is shewn throughout their work. The painters of Siena may speak for themselves in the statutes of their guild drawn up in 1355. They act on the principle on which St. Paulinus of Nola had insisted, and which Comestor stated in the twelfth century, *Picturae ecclesiarum sunt quasi libri laicorum.*[3]

[1] Not a few of the painters like Jacobus Torriti, Lorenzo Monaco, Fra Angelico, Fra Bartolommeo, Fra Lippo Lippi, were themselves monks of various orders.

[2] *Giotto and His Works in Padua*, p. 17.

[3] *Historia Scholastica: Hist. Evang.* p. 5. Sir C. Eastlake (Kugler, I.

"In the beginning, in the middle, and in the end of words and actions, our order is in the name of the Almighty God and of the Virgin Mother, our Lady Mary, Amen. Since we are teachers to unlearned men," they said, "of the marvels done by the power and strength of holy religion, and since no undertaking, however small, can have a beginning or an end without these three things; that is, without the power to do, without knowledge, and without true love of work; and since in God every perfection is eminently united; now to the end that, in this our calling, however unworthy it may be, we may have a certain inspiration of good beginning and a good ending in all our words and deeds, with great desire, we ask the aid of the Divine grace, and commence by a dedication to the honour of the Name, and in the Name of the most Holy Trinity."[1]

These early masters are now loved and valued, and many find in their works an inexpressible charm. But this growth of a pure taste is comparatively recent, and to this day those who have been taught only to admire the antique, and the smooth perfection — too often the mere splendid nullity — of modern painters, pass the old Italian pictures with something like contempt. Even Sir J. Reynolds characterizes their simplicity as mere "penury," arising from want of knowledge, of resources, of ability to see otherwise — the offspring, not of choice, but of necessity. Hogarth in his *Enthusiasm Delineated* is so absolutely disdainful of Umbrian Cherubs, that he describes them as infants' heads with ducks' wings under their chins, flying about, singing psalms, and he paints one with duck's legs. Sir D. Wilkie ranked them with the Chinese and the Hindoos, and the English criticism of that day saw in them nothing better than "faded and *soulless* attempts of decrepit monkish littleness." It needed the teaching of Lord

p. xiv.) thinks that the painters made use of Comestor's book. They were certainly influenced by scholastic commentaries mainly drawn from the early Fathers.

[1] Quoted by Gaye, *Carteggio Inedito.* II. 1, Firenze, 1839.

Lindsay, of Rio, and of Ruskin to shew us that Giotto and the early masters "delivered the burning messages of prophecy with the stammering lips of infancy." Mr. Dennistoun in his *Dukes of Urbino* points out that to sympathize with early Italian Art, we must breathe the sweet enthusiasm which decorated the monastery of the Saint of Assisi, and the religious thought which evoked the frescoes of Santa Maria Novella in Florence, the Campo Santo of Pisa, and the Cathedral of Orvieto.

Throughout the fourteenth century among the painters who are called Giotteschi — because they did little more than carry on the impulse which they had received from Giotto's genius — the sense of the moral functions of Art continues unimpaired. They are, like true poets, "simple, sensuous, passionate." For details and accessories they care but little. Their one object is to tell their sacred story in all its beauty and simplicity. "Hence comes that powerful sincerity of emotion, that astonishing unity of thought, which in spite of deficiency of technique, preserve to the blossoming season of Italian Art an incomparable splendour."[1]

Our great art-critic has said that "in the noblest sense of the word no vain and selfish, no shallow or petty, no false, persons can paint." Nor is this any expression of passing enthusiasm. Great thinkers and great artists coincide in holding the same truth. No one will suspect Diderot of an excess of religious reverence; yet speaking of a great painter, his judgment was that "degradation of taste, of colour, of composition, of design, has followed, step by step, the degradation of his character. What must the artist have on his canvas? That which he has in his imagination; that which he has in his life."

"Art neither belongs to religion nor to ethics," says Victor Cousin; "but like them, it brings us nearer to the Infinite, one of the forms of which it manifests to us. God is the source of all beauty, of all truth, of all religion, of

[1] Lafenestre, I. 61.

all morality. The most exalted object, therefore, of Art is to reveal in its own manner the sentiment of the Infinite."

The authority of two great English painters tells in the same direction.

"The art which we profess," says Sir Joshua Reynolds, "has beauty for its object: this it is our business to discover and to express. But the beauty of which we are in quest is general and intellectual; it is an idea that subsists only in the mind: the sight never beheld it, nor has the hand expressed it; it is an idea residing in the breast of the artist, which he is always labouring to impart, and which he dies at last without imparting, but which he is yet so far able to communicate as to raise the thoughts and extend the views of the spectator; and which, by a succession of art, may be so far diffused that its effects may extend themselves imperceptibly into public benefits, and be among the means of bestowing on whole nations refinement of taste, which, if it does not lead directly to purity of manners, obviates at least their greatest depravation, by disentangling the mind from appetite, and conducting the thoughts through successive stages of excellence, till that contemplation of universal rectitude and harmony, which began by taste, may, as it is exalted and refined, conclude in virtue."

"Art," says Sir Frederic Leighton, the President of the Royal Academy, "is wholly independent of morality; there is, nevertheless, no error deeper or more deadly than to deny that the moral complexion, the *ethos*, of the artist, does, in truth, tinge every work of his hand, and fashion — in silence, but with the certainty of fate — the course and current of his whole career. Believe me, whatever of dignity, whatever of strength, we have within us, will display and make strong the labours of our hands; whatever littleness degrades our spirit will lessen them and drag them down; whatever noble fire is in our hearts will burn also in our work; whatever purity is ours will chasten

and exalt it. For as we are, so our work is; and what we sow in our lives, that beyond a doubt we shall reap, for good or for ill, in the strengthening and defacing of whatever gifts have fallen to our lot."

I quote these words because they express with all the weight of authority the views with which this book has been written.

PROGRESS OF THE RENAISSANCE.

It must here suffice to refer to the abbreviated list of the chief schools of painting at the end of the volume, which will prepare the reader for the names which will most frequently recur, and will present at least the approximate periods covered by their lives. I will also point out the most salient characteristics of the main successive epochs of religious Art. For further information, the reader must consult some of the very numerous works from which a small and careful selection has been made in the appended list of authorities.

SCHOOLS OF PAINTING.

The Italians say: —

Veneziani, gran Signori;
Padovani, gran Dottori;
Vicentini, magnagatti;
Veronesi, mezzo matti;
Bresciani, spaccacantoni;
Bergamasci, facoglioni.

These old Italian rhymes illustrate the haughty magnificence of the Venetian style of art; the skill of the Paduan; the cheerfulness of the Veronese; and the sturdy independence of the school of Brescia.

"The word *school* has various significations with writers on Art; in its widest sense it means all the painters

of a given country, as 'the Italian School.' In a more restricted sense, it refers to the style which may distinguish the painters of a particular locality or period, as 'the Bolognese School.' In its most limited sense it signifies the distinctive style of a particular master, as 'the School of Raphael.'" — WORNUM.

In the list of painters at the end of the volume dates are furnished. There is undoubtedly an element of confusion in the classification of painters by schools. Rio, who introduced the expression "Umbrian school," and was the first to do justice to the School of Siena, had also to adopt a sort of "moral geography," and to speak of the "Mystic School."

There are two great ages of Italian Art — the Giottesque period, which has sometimes been called the heroic; and the Scientific, which began with more thorough knowledge of anatomy, perspective, and chiaroscuro.

Baron Rumohr, a special authority on the School of Florence, distinguishes its three main tendencies during the fifteenth century, which represents the scientific period after Cimabue, and the Giotteschi.

1. There was a group of painters who aimed at the expression of action, movement, and intense passion, represented by Masolino da Panicale, Masaccio, Fra Lippo Lippi, Pesellino, Botticelli, and Filippino Lippi.

2. The painters who aimed at realistic probability and correctness in hitting off the characteristics of individual things, perhaps began with Cosimo Roselli, and are also represented by Baldovinetti and Ghirlandajo.

3. Some painters were powerfully influenced by the achievements of sculpture, such as Pollajuolo, Verrocchio, L. da Vinci, and Lorenzo di Credi.

Adopting another line of division, Mr. Ruskin selects three names as the representatives of the art of their day, and of all subsequent time. They are: —

i. Giotto, the first of the great line of dramatists, terminating in Raphael.

ii. Orcagna, the head of that branch of the contemplative schools which leans towards terror, terminating in Michael Angelo.

iii. Angelico, the head of the contemplatives, concerned with the heavenly idea, around whom may be grouped: first, Duccio and the Sienese who preceded him, and afterwards Pinturicchio, Perugino, and Leonardo da Vinci.

In another passage Mr. Ruskin again divides painters into three classes: —

1. Those who take the good and leave the evil, admitting into their pictures no evil passions, no storms, no darkness; such as Angelico, Perugino, Francia, Raphael, Bellini, Stothard.

2. Those who take nature unhesitatingly, sympathizing with the good, but frankly confessing the evil; such as Giotto, Tintoret, Turner.

3. Those who take the evil only (or mostly); such as Salvator Rosa, Correggio, Wouvermanns.

To the impulse of religious enthusiasm which so powerfully influenced some of the Renaissance painters, must be added the effects produced by an intensely eager study of nature and of man; and those produced by the revival of classical literature and the return to antique models. Giotto was a powerful mover in the first direction; Niccolo Pisano in the second.

In his remarkable lecture on the relations between Michael Angelo and Tintoret, Mr. Ruskin gives a brilliant sketch of the religious decline which marked the epoch of the later Renaissance, and of the schools which followed it. He says that "the course of Art divides itself hitherto, among all nations of the world that have practised it successfully, into three great periods."

The first is that in which the conscience is undeveloped, and the religious imagination contracted though often vivid, and the conduct in satisfied harmony with the undeveloped conscience.

The second stage is the formation of the conscience

by the discovery of the true laws of social order and personal virtue, coupled with sincere effort to live by such laws. During this stage 'all the arts advance steadily, and are lovely even in their deficiencies, as the buds of flowers are lovely by their vital force, swift change, and continent beauty.'

In the third stage the conscience is entirely formed, but the nation, finding its precepts painful, tries to compromise obedience to its laws. . . . Religion is made pompous and pleasurable, and the magnificent display of the powers of Art gained by the previous sincerity, is followed by their extinction, which is rapid and complete, exactly in the degree in which the nation resigns itself to hypocrisy.

"The works of Raphael, Michael Angelo, and Tintoret belong to this period of compromise.

"In their first searching and sincere activities, the doctrines of the Reformation produced the most instructive art, and the grandest literature yet given to the world; while Italy, in her interested resistance to those doctrines, polluted and exhausted the arts she already possessed. Her iridescence of dying statesmanship, her magnificences of hollow piety, were represented in the arts of Venice and Florence by two mighty men on either side: Titian and Tintoret — Michael Angelo and Raphael. Of the calm and brave statesmanship, the modest and faithful religion, which had been her strength, I am content to name one chief representative at Venice, — John Bellini."

Mr. Ruskin proceeds to map out the chronological relations between these painters: —

He thinks that the best effort and deadly catastrophe took place in the forty years between 1480, when Michael Angelo was five and Titian three years old, and 1520, when Raphael died. Bellini represents the best art before them, and Tintoret the best art after them. Bellini died four years before Raphael, and Tintoret was born four years before Bellini died.

"In the best works of Bellini we find," he says, "the

first essentials of the greatest art: faultless workmanship; serenity; the face principal, not the body; and in the face only joy and beauty, never vileness, vice, or pain. The changes which issued from the example and influence of Michael Angelo were ill work for good, tumult for peace, the flesh for the spirit, and the curse of God for His blessing."[1]

Among the painters most remarkable for the purity and intensity of their religious feeling we may name Fra Angelico, Sandro Botticelli, Fra Bartolommeo, Lorenzo di Credi, Lorenzo Lotto, Bernardino Luini, Giovanni Bellini, and Raphael in his earliest phase.

A very powerful effect was produced on the history of painting by the genius of Masaccio. The figure of a kneeling youth who shivers in the water, in *St. Peter Baptizing*, constituted an epoch in Art, and the Brancacci Chapel became through Masaccio a school for artists. Even Raphael did not disdain to borrow from this "supreme and solitary genius." His work shewed that the influence of classical antiquity, which had powerfully affected sculpture, had now found its way into painting. "Giotto," says Mr. Gilbert, "had introduced simplicity, dignity, dramatic and touching action. Masaccio added to these grandeur of pose, good drawing, acquaintance with the nude, perspective, shadow, atmosphere, reality." Even Leonardo da Vinci, after speaking of Giotto's greatness and the decadence of imitation which followed it, adds, "Thus it went on from century to century, until Tommaso of Florence, nicknamed Masaccio, shewed by his perfect works how those who take for their standard any one but Nature, the mistress of all masters, weary themselves in vain."

Annibale Caro wrote for his tomb the inscription: —

> "Pinsi e la mia pittura al ver fu pari
> Atteggiai, l' avvivai, le diedi il moto,
> Le diedi affetto, insegni a Buonarotto
> A tutti gli altri, e da me solo impari."

[1] Aratra Pentelici, § 220.

Masaccio was born in 1402, and disappeared, wholly unnoticed at Rome, in 1429.

Paolo di Dono, surnamed Uccello from his love of painting birds, was born in 1397, and was the first ardent student of perspective, with a love for which he was inspired by the works of Brunelleschi, Ghiberti, and Donatello.

The impulse borrowed from sculpture, the study of the nude, and of anatomy, was greatly increased by Antonio del Pollajuolo (1429–1496), Andrea Verrocchio (1432–1488), and Luca Signorelli, of Cortona (1441?–1523).

Two men, who were not themselves painters, powerfully influenced the Renaissance movement in Florence in opposite directions: Cosimo de' Medici, by his magnificent patronage; Savonarola, by his burning enthusiasm, which affected such men as Botticelli and Fra Bartolommeo. They never forgot the dictum of their prophet-teacher: "Creatures are beautiful in proportion as they participate in, and approximate to, the beauty of their Creator, and perfection of bodily form is relative to beauty of mind."

We shall have occasion to see that the three men in whom the genius of the Renaissance culminated, before it began to decline, were Leonardo da Vinci, whom Morelli calls "perhaps the most richly gifted man that Mother Nature ever made"; Michael Angelo, whose grandeur was so deeply felt even by Raphael that he thanked God for having been born in his days; and Raphael himself.

Mantegna, an eminently sculpturesque painter, is the glory of the School of Mantua, and owed much to the collection of antiques made by his master Squarcione.

The Umbrian School, of which Perugino, Pinturicchio, and Raphael were the chief glory, is remarkable for what the Italians call *gentilezza*. It leant to the mystic rather than to the classical, and the too languorous ecstasies into which it was apt to degenerate, formed the most marked antithesis to the gloom and sternness of Michael Angelo.

Raphael inherited the artistic faculty from his excellent

father, Giovanni Santi, and he was perfected by the absorption of many influences. He learnt something from his first master, Timoteo Viti, who had been a pupil of Francia; much from Perugino; much from Fra Bartolommeo in Florence; and much from Michael Angelo in Rome. "Between the powerful individuality of Michael Angelo and of Correggio, the divine Raphael," says Morelli, "stands midway, as the most measured, most calm, most perfect of the artists, the only one who in some respects was the equal of the Greeks. Happy the land that has such men to offer to the world!"

The special glory of the Venetian School was its colouring, which assumed its supreme perfection in Titian. The art of oil painting was introduced into Venice by Antonello da Messina, whose oldest extant dated picture, of the year 1465, is the *Salvator Mundi* in the National Gallery.

There were four epochs in Venetian painting: —

1. The Byzantine, chiefly famed for sculpture and mosaics, down to 1400.

2. The epoch of the religious paintings of the Vivarini, sincere in feeling, but inferior in skill, 1480–1481.

3. The Bellini epoch, 1480–1520, in which religious feeling found its finest expression.

4. The Titian epoch, splendid, but more worldly, 1520–1600.

5. The decadence, 1600–1800.[1]

The great Venetian, Tintoretto (1518–1594), aimed at uniting "the colouring of Titian with the design of Michael Angelo." His sweeping impetuosity of style earned him the nickname of "il furioso." The Venetians said "he had three pencils — one of gold, one of silver, and the third of iron." Annibale Carracci well expressed his inequality, when he said that "if he was sometimes equal to Titian, he was often inferior to Tintoretto."

The decadence which followed the exaggeration of Michael Angelo's influence is seen in the violent efforts,

[1] See C. Blanc, *École Vénitienne.*

contorted figures, and academic mannerism of painters like Bronzino (1502–1572) and Salviati (1510–1563).

After the death of Leonardo, Raphael, Michael Angelo, and Correggio, begin the Eclectics, who lost themselves in vain efforts to combine the ineffable grace of Raphael, the strange smile of Leonardo, the harmonious sweetness of Correggio, and the grandiose anatomy of Michael Angelo. The Bolognese Eclectics protested against Angelo's mannerism, but fell into the yet falser principle of attempting to create an "ideal" style by the copy of separate excellencies. This school was founded by the Carraccis about 1580, but was followed by men greater than themselves, such as Guido Reni (b. 1575), Domenichino (b. 1581), and Guercino (b. 1571).

The Eclectics rapidly sank into academic mediocrity and insipid earthiness, and provoked the coarse reaction of the Naturalists, who seemed, like Caravaggio, to prefer all that was vulgar and vile to what had grace and charm. Caravaggio represents the Zolaism of Art.

The chief painter of the detestable Neapolitan School of the Tenebrosi (so called from their preference for dark tints) was Ribera (Spagnoletto, b. 1588). The best known pupil of Ribera was the gifted but unhappy Salvator Rosa, who belonged to a company which took the name of *I percossi*, "the stricken ones." I need say nothing more of him here than the fact that he addressed his fellow-man as

"Insana
Turba de' vivi, perfidi, e malvagi
Senza fè, senza amor, cruda, inumana."

The motto which he chose for his picture of *Human Frailty* was: —

"Nasci poena; labor vita; necesse mori."

The two most glorious names of the Spanish School are those of Velasquez and Murillo, whom I shall often mention in the following pages. The artists of Spain have

given three names to the three different styles adopted by Murillo: 1. *Frio*, somewhat hard and dry; 2. *Caldo*, shewing more sentiment and passion; 3. *Vaporoso*, "misty," with less pronounced outlines.

This handful of hints and notes will be largely supplemented when I speak of particular artists. It is only intended here to give some elementary information to such readers as may be unfamiliar with the history of Art. I may conclude with some remarks of Mr. Wyke Bayliss, which I abbreviate: —

"Margaritone may be called the forerunner; Cimabue, Giotto, the Van Eycks, and Masaccio the evangelists; and the great masters of the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries the apostles of Christian Art. For what was their theme but Christ? . . . The one central figure that in the splendour of His divine beauty has consecrated Art forever, was it not that of the Master? The influence of religion on Art is not limited to its direct action on the individual worker; it reaches further than that. It governs the whole drift of Art, bending men to its services, though individually they rebel against its precepts. The learning of Da Vinci, the versatility of Michael Angelo, the impetuosity of Tintoretto, the patience of Carlo Dolci, are all bent to the same purpose.

"There was an element in Christian Art that classic Art never admitted — that is, suffering. The Christian could not leave out that element of suffering; it had become part of his faith.

"The strength of classic Art had been ideal beauty; the strength of the Renaissance was the passion of expression. . . . But in this passion there was danger as well as strength. The coldness of classic Art could not keep it alive; the passion of the Renaissance did not keep it pure, and in its corruption what a degradation it reached!

"Mediæval Art was religious, or it was nothing. Mediæval Art, in its first splendour, was Art transfigured by contact with the divine character and person of Christ. But it sank to the making of painted images to be dressed in muslin."[1]

[1] *The Witness of Art*, pp. 66 fg.

Book IV.

CHRIST AND THE VIRGIN MOTHER.

"Riguarda omai nella faccia ch' a Cristo
Più s' assomiglia." — Dante, *Parad.* XXXII. 85.

THE MADONNA AND CHILD.

"Bright angels are around thee,
They that have served thee from thy birth are there;
Their hands with stars have crowned thee;
Thou, peerless queen of Air,
As sandals to thy feet the silver moon dost wear."

— LONGFELLOW.

"Out of all the hundred fair Madonnas,
Seen in many a rich and distant city,
Sweet Madonnas with the mother's bosom,
Sad Madonnas with the eyes of anguish,
Rapt Madonnas caught in clouds to heaven,
Clouds of golden, glad, adoring angels, —
She of Florence in the Chair, so perfect;
She that was the Grand Duke's wealth and glory,
She that makes the picture of the *Goldfinch;*
Ghirlandajo's, with the cloak and jewels;
Guido's Queen which men and angels worship;
Della Robbia's best; and that sweet Perla,
Seville's bright boast, Mary of Murillo
(Painted, so they vow, with milk and roses);
Guido Reni's quadro at Bologna;
Munich's masterpiece, grim Dürer's goddess;
Yes, and thy brave work, Beltraffio mio —
Many as the lessons are I owe them
Thanks and worship, grateful recollections,
Oftenest I shall think of Perugino's."

— SIR E. ARNOLD.

THE MADONNA.

"Cosi la circulata melodia
Si sigillava, e tutti gli altri lumi
Facean sonar lo nome di Maria."
— DANTE, *Parad.* XXIII. 109–111.

THE Virgin Mary occupies a vast space in Christian Art, and is inseparably mixed up with her Divine Son as an object of adoration in thousands of paintings executed between the culmination of Byzantinism and the Reformation. This fact alone shews how completely and unconsciously the art of an epoch is the reflexion of its beliefs.

Very little is told us in the Gospels, and nothing elsewhere in the New Testament, about the Virgin Mary; but as the Christian ages advanced she received greater and greater prominence in the thoughts of Christians. The apocryphal Gospels have many legends about her. The devotion with which she was regarded assumed a special development in the fourth and fifth centuries. The hymns of Fortunatus and St. Ambrose — the *O Gloriosa Domina*, and *Memento, Salutis auctor* — are full of emotion. St. Epiphanius was a fierce enemy of the Antidicomarianitæ, who denied the perpetual virginity, and St. Jerome frantically denounced Helvidius, who shared their opinion. St. Ephrem Syrus wrote panegyrics of the *Theotokos*, or "Mother of God." The Virgin begins to be a chief figure in the church mosaics. The Council of Ephesus (A.D. 431) condemned Nestorius for rejecting the phrase "Mother of God" (*Theotokos*, *Deipara*), and at

that Council St. Cyril, amid enthusiastic acclamations, burst into a transport of eulogies on her as "the crown of virginity, the sceptre of the orthodox faith, the treasure of the universe, the torch which could never be quenched!" In the fifth century we begin to find pictures of the Virgin, attributed to St. Luke. Hymns were written in her honour, and churches dedicated to her increased in number. In the seventh century the popes and saints vied with each other in doing homage to her name. In Byzantine art she took her established place. A fresh impulse to her worship was given by St. Bernard in the twelfth century. He spoke of the Virgin as *negotium sanctorum*, and wrote the *Salve Regina* in her honour. St. Dominic, St. Francis, St. Thomas Aquinas, and the religious orders in the thirteenth century were her ardent worshippers. The mystics were devoted to her, and the hymn of Hugh of St. Victor, *Salve Mater Salvatoris*, became very popular. Still more popular were the *Stabat mater dolorosa* of St. Bonaventura, and the *Stabat mater speciosa* of Jacopone. The poets prepared the way for the painters, and each great school of painting measures its glory by the beauty of its Madonnas, —

> "Who so above all mothers shone,
> The Mother of the Blessed One."[1]

If we can rightly appreciate the merits and defects of the chief schools and the chief painters in the representation of the Madonna and Child, we shall have gained no insignificant glimpse into the functions and the history of Art. And that for two reasons: —

i. In the first place, it was a sort of *test* subject. It evidenced alike the religious feelings of individual paint-

[1] There can be no doubt that the lovely sacredness of motherhood in general tended to the incessant treatment of this subject. On Egyptian monuments we constantly have Isis on her throne nursing Horus. The Chinese have their pictures of Tien-how, the Queen of Heaven, nursing her child, who holds a lotus-bud, as the symbol of the new birth.

ers, and the highest reach to which they could attain. For the Virgin is the human mother of Him who was the Word of God; and, in painting the Virgin and Child, the painter tried to shew all that he could achieve in the expression of Humanity at its loveliest, and of the Divine in human form. Even if the inspiration of deep religious feeling is absent from the rendering of such a subject, the painter must, at the very lowest, express the sanctity of Motherhood and the innocence of Infancy; and to do this, and nothing more, may well tax the powers of the most consummate genius.

ii. In the second place, in every new Madonna the painter not only challenged comparison with himself, and with all his contemporaries, but with generations of artists during many centuries. Thus, as Gruyer says in his admirable work *Les Vierges de Raphael*, "legions of painters are reunited under the banner of Raphael.[1] His Virgins are the sovereign expression of a religious idea, incessantly pursued, not only during the two centuries of the Renaissance (the fourteenth and fifteenth), but also by all the Christian generations from the Catacombs down to Giotto." We find "Madonnas" from the second(?) to the fifth century.[2] They become rare from that time till the thirteenth, but were produced by hundreds between 1294 and 1523. The manner in which the subject is treated marks every improvement of process, every change of conception, every powerful influence of individuality, every ripple on the deep ocean of religious life.

Mr. Ruskin bids us "observe this broad general fact about the three sorts of Madonnas."

i. There is first the *Madonna Dolorosa;* the Byzantine

[1] The following chapter was written before this interesting book came into my hands; but I have made repeated reference to Gruyer in its final form.

[2] I quote Gruyer's statement, but do not vouch for its accuracy. In the Catacombs the figures of an *orante* — usually a woman with arms outstretched in prayer, often a type of the Church as the Bride of Christ — have been mistaken by some for pictures of the Virgin.

type and Cimabue's. It is the noblest of all; and the earliest in distinct popular influence.

ii. Secondly, the *Madone Reine*, which essentially represents the Frank and Norman ideal; crowned, calm, and full of power and gentleness.

iii. Thirdly, the *Madone Nourrice*, which is the Raphaelesque, and, generally, the late and decadent type. The *Vierge Dorée* on the South Transept Porch of Amiens, is a specimen of a Mother wholly occupied with her Child,[1] and the Virgin of the West Porch is a fine ideal of the Queen of Heaven.

Further than this, we may classify Madonnas under separate heads according to the general method of treatment: —

i. There is the Madonna with the Child alone, the absolute type of divine maternity.

ii. The Child Baptist is introduced as though for a little playmate of the Child Christ, but rather, in earlier painters, to connect Jesus with the prophecies of the past, and to associate all Humanity in the blessing of the Son of Man.

iii. When St. Joseph, St. Elizabeth, St. Anna, also join the group, it is called a Holy Family.

iv. The Madonna is represented as enthroned in glory.

v. The Virgin and Child are surrounded by Saints, who mingle freely together, generally in some fair meadow scene. The picture then belongs to the class known as Holy Conversations.

Each Madonna, besides its pictorial value, has its moral instructiveness. "Painting," as Poussin says, "is an image of things incorporeal, rendered sensible by corporeal imitations." Thus the greatest painter is the one who most perfectly unites beauty with spirituality.[2]

The intensity of feeling with which the subject was approached finds expression in the beautiful invocation of Petrarca: —

[1] *The Bible of Amiens*, p. 64.

[2] Gruyer, I. viii.

"Vergine bella, che di sol vestita,
Coronata di stelle, al sommo sole
Piacesti sì, che' n te sua luce ascose
Amor mi spinge a dir di te parole." [1]

It breathes, also, through the magnificent invocation which Dante puts into the mouth of St. Bernard: —

"Vergine Madre, figlia del tuo Figlio,
Umile ed alta più che creatura,
Termine fisso d' eterno consiglio;
Tu se' colei che l' umana natura
Nobilitasti sì, che' l suo Fattore
Non disdegnò di farsi sua fattura." [2]

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[1] II. Canz. VIII.

[2] *Paradiso*, XXXIII. 1–39. The lines are thus translated by Dean Plumptre: —

"O Virgin Mother, daughter of thy Son,
Lowlier and loftier than all creatures seen,
Goal of the counsels of the Eternal One;
Thyself art She who this our nature mean
Hast so ennobled that its Maker great
Deigned to become what through it made had been."

I.

THE MATER DOLOROSA.

"All hath been told her touching her dear Son,
And all shall be accomplished: where He sits
Even now, a Babe, He holds the symbol fruit."

—D. G. Rossetti.

"There is a vision in the heart of each
Of justice, mercy, wisdom, tenderness
To wrong and pain, and knowledge of their curse:
And these embodied in a woman's form
That best transmits them pure as first received
From God above her, to mankind below."

—R. Browning.

Of all the various types of the Virgin and Child, there is not one of which hundreds of specimens have not been produced during the long career of Christian Art.

The earliest type is Byzantine, which remained more or less unchangeable for many centuries. The face of the Virgin is always dark, sometimes even black, with allusion to the verse "I am black, but comely, ye daughters of Jerusalem, as the tents of Kedar, as the curtains of Solomon." "She is depicted as a matron of middle age, with her right hand raised in the act of benediction, a veil upon her head, which is encircled with the nimbus; upon her lap is seated an already well grown and fully clothed child, also in act of benediction."[1]

The Child — partly perhaps from the lack of skill in the ancient painters, but more from their adoring reverence — never has any of the attributes of childhood, and scarcely

[1] Kugler, *Handbook of Painting*, I. 39.

even approaches (except in smallness of size) to the child-like form.

We see at a glance the immense change of feeling which dominates the pictures of the Renaissance. In that age the main effort is to make the Virgin not so much majestic as supremely beautiful. The gladness of maternity displaces the gloom of awful convictions, and the sense of the prophetic words "Yea, a sword shall pierce through thine own heart also." The hair is no longer covered, nor the feet concealed. Realism would have despised such conventions, as due only to superstition. The Child becomes a child in all the unconscious feebleness and babbling joy of infancy. In the pictures of Andrea del Sarto and many others the painters have not even shrunk from representing the Divine Child with an expression of *espièglerie*. Such pictures could not be in any deep sense devotional. They aimed at giving the artist's conception of the fact; they forgot that the fact was also a great Idea. They represent a Mother and Child, and scarcely pretend to remind the spectator that the Mother was blessed among women and that the little naked new born Babe was "the Lord of Time and all the worlds."

Even in Cimabue and Duccio we mark the decisive commencement of this change. In them Art has already begun "to break the chains of dogmatic conventionalism in which theology had bound it, and to take for models the living Mother and Babe." The progress is strikingly marked in Duccio's Madonna in our National Gallery. Here the Child is no longer depicted in the formal act of giving the priestly benediction, but, with a thoroughly human impulse, is tenderly drawing aside the veil from His mother's face, that He may look into it, and the Angels may adore.[1] "This is an incident," it has been said, "insignificant in itself, but important as shewing a tendency; — a tendency which is soon to give a new aspect to the Virgin and Child, and introduce us to the Holy Family."

[1] See the woodcut of this picture already given, p. 119.

"The Virgins which preside over the basilicas of the sixth to the eighth centuries," says Gruyer, "represent faithfully the epochs of their production. They reflect the almost savage harshness of an age of blood; they repeat the despair and desolation of terrible times."[1] Such language is only partially true. Any one who has stood in the old desolate church of San Donato at Murano, and gazed on the tall figure of the Virgin with her folded palms and the tears on either cheek, which stands out on the gold ground of the ancient mosaic over the arch, will surely feel some of the mysterious and immense attractiveness with which such a figure appealed to the imagination of the mediæval worshippers. The central idea expressed in such a representation is the gentleness, the tenderness, the compassion of womanhood, idealized with adorable grace by the troubled hearts of millions whose consciences made them afraid. Men erred, indeed, utterly in regarding Mary as more merciful than the Lord of Life, but there are idolatries ten times more deadly than "the loving errors made by generations of God's simple children." The sorrows of mankind have perpetuated this type. The sense that even the Blessed Virgin had learnt pity by the suffering of anguish is the origin of the wretched dolls which may be seen in hundreds of continental churches, where the Madonna is rudely imaged "with seven swords stuck in her heart." In pictures and images which human beings practically worship they do not look for loveliness, but for effective symbolism. In the Church of Saronno the peasants hardly care to gaze upon the beautiful frescoes of Luini, but they will wait for hours on the chance of seeing the rude and shapeless image of the Madonna dei Miracoli. It was to no lovely Madonna of Raphael, but to an old black image of the Virgin at Toledo, that Ignatius Loyola consecrated his abandoned sword.

Of the Madonna Dolorosa there are two lovely specimens in our National Gallery.

[1] Gruyer, *Les Vierges de Raphael*, I. 93.

One of these is the famous *tondo* of Sandro Botticelli.[1] Those who only look at his *Spring*, or *Venus rising from the Sea*, might think that the painter's soul was full of joy; but a picture like this shews how deep and dark were the shadows flung by the Renaissance; how terrible were the troubles stirred up by the feverish unrest of the doubts and passions which it let loose.

Madonna Dolorosa. (Botticelli.)

In this lovely picture, of which the fascination grows continually on those who gaze at it, the Virgin is giving her breast to the unweaned Child.[2] A long-haired, youth-

[1] N. G. 275.

[2] The picture might, therefore, be classed with those of the third type

ful St. John, his face full of sorrow, bows his head and folds his hands in adoration; on the other side, a beautiful angel turns upwards his melancholy gaze towards the Mother. Her eyes and her thoughts are far away. She is not looking at the Child upon her breast; apparently she is not even thinking of Him; or if she is, she thinks only of His sufferings. Even the angels, lovely as they are, shew an almost human despair in their angelic hearts. They are wholly unlike the incarnate Innocencies of Fra Angelico, with their robes of tender hues, and their many-coloured, sunlit wings. Still less do they resemble the radiant child-denizens of heaven, as Bellini, Raphael, Francia, Carpaccio, or Boccati painted them. As we look at them, we almost fancy that they will burst into "such tears as angels weep," and that such tears must often have coursed each other down their pale and melancholy cheeks.

Still more pathetic in its hopelessness is the expression of the Virgin. It has none of the fervent passion of maternity, none of the rapt joyance of the Magnificat; but there is an infinite yearning in the far-off gaze. As in Botticelli's Madonna in the Uffizi, this Virgin is bowed down with deepest woe.[1] The large, open eyes seem drowned in tears, as though she were devoting herself and her Son for the Human Race. Yet, amid her agony, she more than keeps her beauty. "Is not the riddle of the human race contained in such pictures?" asks Gruyer. "Are not these Virgins sad with the unconquerable sadness which man everywhere carries with him, while their brow is radiant, at the same time, with the hope which constantly reinspires us? This need of infinitude which momently torments and elevates us, is a sure guarantee of

— the Vergine Lattante; but its other quality — that of sadness — is more distinctive. Mr. Symonds (*New Review*, May, 1893) talks of the Virgin's "*beauté maladive*" and "*yeux meurtris.*"

[1] The *tondo* form of pictures, like those of Botticelli in the Uffizi and the National Gallery, became popular, Morelli tells us, after Luca Della Robbia had used it for his terra-cotta groups.

our immortality." [1] Florence was far more deeply moved than was the gayer-hearted Venice, by the moral and intellectual upheaval of Renaissance impulses.

We may here pause for a moment to account for this predominant sorrowfulness of Botticelli's pictures.

Perhaps it rose from "the troublous times of Italy" in which he lived. Great tempests swept over him when the prophet-voice of Savonarola woke his spirit as with the thunders of Sinai, and won over this child of the Renaissance to join the mortified ranks of the Piagnoni. Or, perhaps, the sadness resulted from the *conflict* in his heart between the influence of the Renaissance, with its half-Pagan classicalism and its deifications of natural impulses, and the Christian feeling deepened by the perils of the age, the Plague of Florence (1475–1480), and the preaching of the great Dominican of San Marco. Mr. Ruskin says that "there is upon Botticelli's pictures at once the joy of Resurrection and the solemnity of the grave." [2]

Very different, and in my judgment utterly alien from Botticelli's real feelings, is the explanation offered by Mr. Pater.[3] He thinks that it is the *human affections* of the Virgin that make her shrink from her Divine Exaltation. According to him, Botticelli's Virgin is making "the great refusal," rather than crying in rapt obedience "Behold the handmaid of the Lord; let Him do unto me as seemeth Him good." "You may have thought," he says, "there was something mean and abject in the Virgin, for the lines of the face have little nobleness, and the colour is wan. For with Botticelli, she too, though she holds in her hands the Desire of all Nations, is one of those who is neither for God nor for His enemies, and her

[1] *Les Vierges de Raphael*, I. 272.

[2] See *Ariadne Florentina*, p. 161; *Fors Clavigera*, Letter XXII. Botticelli "shews the mystic spirit of mediæval times blended with the freedom of modern thought, and the delicate charm of the young Renaissance deepened by the severity of a former age." — *Portfolio*, XIII. 58.

[3] *Studies of the Renaissance.*

choice is on her face. She shrinks from the presence of the Divine Child, and pleads, in unmistakable undertones, for a warmer, lower humanity."

To me it seems that Botticelli would have shuddered at attributing to the Virgin so base a shrinking from her high destiny. A loving and reverent student of Dante, and one to whom the Madonna was the Queen of Heaven, it is inconceivable that he could have classed her with the objects of the utmost scorn of the poet of the *Inferno* — with those who, whirled round and round the limbo of the despicable, rejected by Heaven, and despised even by Hell, follow forevermore the aimless flutter of the sooty flag of Acheron. Surely it would be far more reasonable to infer that the gloom of Botticelli's pictures is due partly to the deep vein of melancholy in his own temperament, partly to the awful tragedies which he had witnessed. He had seen the martyrdom of Savonarola, and the grimly tragic fate of Simonetta, whom he paints in his *Spring*, and of Giuliano de' Medici, whom he had painted as a boy-angel in his Madonna in the Uffizi. His mood accorded, too, with the religious temper of his day, which saw in the examples of men like St. Dominic and St. Francis of Assisi a mixture of rapturous blessedness and keenest woes.

In Botticelli's Uffizi *Coronation of the Madonna*, we have one of his most characteristic pictures, marked by all the "silent melancholy expressed by the face of the Virgin, and an eager service in childlike saints and angels, attending for the performance of the simplest offices." [1] Two angels are holding a crown, to which is attached a floating veil, over the head of the intensely sorrowful Mother. They are not exquisite, heavenly beings, or radiant children, but are boys on the verge of youth, with long tresses,

[1] Crowe and Cavalcaselle, II. 416. "As though human Mother and Divine Child were anticipating the inevitable pangs of destiny too high for woman, too humiliating for Deity, the calm profound of early twilight in clear sky, and the finely outlined leaves of roses and stems of palm-trees silhouetted against lucid light, making a fit background for their love and resignation." — J. A. Symonds, *New Review*, May, 1883.

dark or fair. The Virgin is about to write the Magnificat in a book, and two other angels hold the inkstand, and seem full of earnest curiosity. One of the two others, who is holding the crown, looks over their shoulders. The Child lays one hand on the open book and in the other holds a ripe and bursting pomegranate. He is looking upward at His mother with loving solicitude.[1] Nothing could less resemble the expression of the Virgin's features than the words which she is supposed to be writing, "My soul doth magnify the Lord, and my spirit hath rejoiced in God my Saviour."

Other ideals of the Virgin, in which the Madonna Dolorosa is not always distinguishable from the Madone Nourrice, are seen in the lovely pictures of Giovanni Bellini. If these be less powerful than the Virgins of Michael Angelo, they are far more enchanting. We have one noble specimen in our National Gallery, — the *Madonna of the Pomegranate*. It shews us that the devotional sincerity which breathes through all Bellini's pictures is not incompatible with widening knowledge and advancing skill.

The Virgin supports the Child on her right arm, while in her left hand she holds a pomegranate, on which the right hand of the Infant Christ is resting. Their heads are thrown into relief by a green curtain with a red border. In the background is a landscape. Both heads are full of the noblest pathos. In this picture there is obviously something deeper than in Angelico's radiant *Madonna of the Star*. There is human feeling and expression and anxiously awakened thought. The pomegranate symbolizes the coming cross and passion, prefigured by the blood-red heart of the fruit.[2] This is the signifi-

[1] See Woltmann and Woermann, II. 169; Dohme, p. 48.

[2] In Fra Lippo's Madonna in the Pitti, the Virgin holds a half-open pomegranate, which the Child grasps in His right hand, while He holds up some of the crimson seeds in His left. The incident is indeed common. The Child holds a pomegranate in Botticelli's Madonna in the Uffizi, and he introduces the same motive into many of his pictures (as

cance given to it in some lines on this picture in *Love in Idleness* (1883): —

> "Years pass and change; Mother and Child remain:
> Mother so proudly sad, so sadly wise,
> With perfect face and wonderful, calm eyes,
> Full of a mute expectancy of pain;
> Child, of whose love the mother seems so fain,
> Looking far off as if in other skies.
> He saw the hill of Crucifixion rise,
> And knew the horror and would not refrain."[1]

But the symbolism of the pomegranate is manifold. Browning called one of the early collections of his poems *Bells and Pomegranates*. He explained that he did so — not because, as Mrs. Barrett Browning sings in *Geraldine's Courtship*, this fruit,

> "if cut deep down the middle,
> Shews a heart within blood-tinctured, of a veined humanity" —

but because the pomegranate was an ancient symbol of good works. This perhaps was the reason why Giotto places a pomegranate in the hand of Dante in his Bargello picture, and why Raphael "crowns his Theology with a garland of the same."

Even the simplest Madonnas of Bellini are inimitable. He scarcely ever painted a more simple one than the *Madonna of the Doves* which is in the Duomo, behind the altar at Bergamo. Some guide-books speak of the Duomo as hardly worth visiting. Not to speak of its splendid marble work, its magnificent ambos of marble and bronze,

in no fewer than four at the New Gallery, 1894). Sometimes an angel presents the fruit to Him; sometimes it lies at His feet. In the lovely Francia of the National Gallery (No. 179), St. Anne offers to the infant Child a peach, symbolical, perhaps, of "the fruits of the Spirit." In the Madonna of Montagna (No. 802), the Child holds a cherry or a strawberry. Often, as in Raphael's *Madonna of the Pink*, and in Previtali's (No. 695), He holds a flower.

[1] Quoted by Mr. E. T. Cook, in his admirable *Popular Handbook to the National Gallery.*

MADONNA OF THE POMEGRANATE. *Giovanni Bellini.*

From the Picture in the National Gallery, London.

and other glories, it contains several fine pictures; but this little Madonna alone most amply repays a visit. The Virgin in a dress of brown and white is standing with her hands folded in prayer. The Child, which even Bellini never surpassed for perfect and divine loveliness, is seated on a dark blue cushion, and is drawing with His left hand a thin robe of red round His naked body, while He leans over and looks down at the wicker basket in which are the two doves — Mary's offering of purification. Two white feathers are lying on the ledge which forms the front of the picture.[1]

The only two painters who for exquisite charm and unvarying devoutness were never surpassed even by Raphael at his best, are Giovanni Bellini and Bernardino Luini. Bellini loses nothing by comparison with his friends and pupils Giorgione, Titian, Cima, Palma Vecchio, or Lorenzo Lotto, of whom the last comes nearest to him in the sense of holiness diffused over his pictures. Luini's "golden pencil" may sustain favourable comparison with that of his master Leonardo da Vinci, to whom several of his works have been attributed for years. Of some of his Madonnas I shall speak later. In their expressiveness they stand midway between the old, solemn Byzantine type of our Lady of Sorrows and the more familiar one of the Madone Nourrice of the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries.

There came a time when, by a sort of reaction from the coarseness and irreverence of some of the sixteenth and seventeenth century painters, Religion again asserted itself. But it was a religion without glow, without force, without spontaneity. It became manneristic, affected, sentimental, full of posturing grace and sugared pret-

[1] Sir C. Eastlake, *The Royal Gallery at Venice*, p. 26, says: "In the Madonna's dark brown, thoughtful eyes, delicately pencilled brow, full, round throat, and finely modelled chin, we find that exquisite ideal of womanhood in which the beauty of faultless features is enhanced by dignity and innocence, an ideal which is all Bellini's own."

tiness. We have specimens of such work in the Madonnas of Carlo Dolci († 1686) and of Sassoferrato († 1685). They bear the same relation to the art of Bellini and Mantegna as Euphuism or the Della Cruscan school of English Literature bear to Shakespeare and Milton.

Madonna Dolorosa. (Carlo Dolci.)

We here reproduce the Virgin and Child by Carlo Dolci. The Virgin is presenting flowers from a basket

to the Divine Infant, around whom she holds a loose veil.[1]

Sassoferrato was one of the Carraccisti, or followers of the Eclectic School of the Carraccis, but he copied many other painters, and his Madonna very clearly illustrates "the distinction between sentimentality and sentiment. The cheeks of his Virgins are often wet with tears, but their soft nullity stirs no such answering feeling in our hearts as is at once awakened by the work of a Botticelli or Bellini."

[1] N. G. 934. See *Modern Painters*, III. "Carlo Dolci est le représentant véritable de ce qu'on appelle *l'art jésuite*. Sa peinture affadie et doucereuse exprime quelquefois les sentimens tendres, mais le plus souvent des airs de béatitude qui touchent à la niaiserie. L'art n'a pas grand'chose à voir dans cette façon de peindre accessible au premier séminariste qui aura la patience de blairéauner ses couleurs dans cette manière polie, onctueuse, et ivoirée qui caractérise l'Italien Carlo Dolci, et l'Hollandais Van der Werff." —Charles Blanc.

II.

THE MADONNA REGINA.

"Indi rimaser lì nel mio cospetto
Regina coeli cantando sì dolce
Che mai da me non si partì il diletto."
—DANTE, *Parad.* XXIII. 127-129.

THE two former types of the Madonna may claim a more or less close connexion with the life of Christ, but the pictures of the Madonna as Queen of Heaven, as the Mother of Wisdom, the Mother of Victory, or the Mother of Mercy, bear almost exclusively on the honour of the Virgin.[1] For this reason I will dwell but briefly on this predominantly French and Norman type.

I could give no purer or sweeter specimen of the Madonna Regina than Fra Angelico's *Madonna of the Star* in the monastery of San Marco at Florence.

In the pictures of the blessed and angelic painter we see an immense advance of technical skill beyond that of the Giotteschi, with a yet more absolute dominance of religious devotion. Perhaps the world never produced a saintlier, sweeter soul — a soul more childlike in its purity — than that of Fra Angelico. The inspiration of love, of innocence, of purity, of faith, of divine communion, breathes from every colour and every face of his soft, silent pictures.

His *Madonna of the Star* is a picture exquisitely sim-

[1] Pictures like Titian's great *Assumption of the Virgin* at Venice do not enter into my subject.

MADONNA REGINA. *Fra Angelico.*

From the Picture in the Monastery of San Marco, Florence.

ple and entirely ideal.[1] He had, of course, no thought of representing the Virgin and Child as they really were in the days of Christ's Humanity. He only sets forth in perfect loveliness the Divine Conceptions of glorified Motherhood, glorified Virginity, glorified Infancy — of all Humanity glorified by being uplifted into direct communion with God. The Mother and the Child are surrounded by the radiant mandorla from head to foot, and over this encircling aureole hangs a golden crown.[2] The Virgin is symbolically clad in a mantle of blue.[3] It falls around her in folds of exquisite dignity and symmetry, and is clasped at the breast by a flower-shaped brooch. It comes over the head, almost concealing her golden hair, and above the forehead it is lit up by a radiant star. In her arms is the Holy Child, but neither the face nor the form are those of a child. The nimbus round His head is broken by a red Maltese cross. The face of the Virgin is infantile, angelic, immaculately divine in its transparent innocence and chastity. It is full of mingled meekness and majesty, "with none either of the complacent exultation or petty watchfulness of maternity; yet her peace is

[1] "The simple monk worked out his own ideal —
And were there ever forms more heavenly fair?
Nay, from the life the ineffable angels there
Seem limned and coloured by their servant leal.
What was his charm? Whence the inflowing grace?
The beauty of holiness! His child-soul dreamed
Where psalm and censer filled the holy place,
Till to take shape the mist the music seemed."
— ANON.

[2] An *aureole* is a glory round the whole body; the *nimbus* surrounds the head only. When the figure stands erect, and the glory is almond-shaped, it is called a *mandorla* or *vesica piscis*.

[3] This was the all but invariable rule in the Middle Ages, and Dante alludes to it in the lines, —

"Onde si coronava il bel zaffiro,
Del quale il Ciel più chiaro s' inzaffira."
— *Parad.* XXIII. 101.

But in many of the older pictures (as in one by Angiolo Gaddi) the Virgin is painted in yellow to represent gold ("Her vesture is of wrought gold"). In a *Coronation of the Virgin*, by Giotto (New Gallery, 1894), she is in white robes edged with black.

mingled with sorrow, as if the promise of the Angel were already underwritten by the prophecy of Simeon." The whole effect of the picture is to purify and to ennoble, but it is the work of a painter who, even in his own days, belonged to a holier past — a past which, despite its immaturity, seems as enchanting and as irrecoverable as the flowers of spring. Such pictures can only be painted in the glow of inspiration. These pure and sinless faces could only have been seen in the visions granted to the rapture of prayer.

As other specimens of the Queen Virgin we may refer to one by Martin Schongauer, and two by Albrecht Dürer.

Schongauer's *Madonna in Rosenhag* is in the church of St. Martin at Colmar. It was painted in 1473. Here, as in Luini's *Madonna of the Rose-trellis*, at Milan, there is a bower of lovely roses.[1] It stands out on the gold ground of the picture, and there are many birds among the flowers. The Virgin seems lost in sorrowful thought. Two angels, as is so common in the German pictures, float over her head, holding a splendid crown. She holds in her arms the naked Child, who has laid one arm around her neck and half hides His little hands in her dark, dishevelled hair. At her feet grows a strawberry plant with its three symbolic leaves.

Two of Albrecht Dürer's are specially famous. One is the *Madonna of the Crescent Moon*, in his *Life of the Virgin*. It occurs in several forms. In one of these, which is undated but early, the Virgin's hair flows behind her. In that of 1514, known as *The Virgin with the Short*

[1] Sir Frederic Leighton says: "The greatest precursor of the riper and more accomplished art of Albert Dürer was, without doubt, Martin Schongauer, of Colmar, whose *Madonna in the Rose-bower*, now in the Church of St. Martin of that city, is a work of strange nobility and force, — a painting Flemish, indeed, in its inspiration, but with something also of Southern gravity and repose, which is never absent from his work, and which we shall miss in the far completer art of his famous successor, Dürer." — *Speech at the Royal Academy*, Dec. 9, 1893.

Hair, she holds a fruit. In those of 1508 and 1516 she has a crown of stars.

The other is the *Coronation in the Garden.* It is dated 1518. The Virgin, a magnificent maiden, in a rich robe fringed with fur, turns her beautiful head to the right.

Madonna Regina of the Crescent Moon. (Dürer.)

Her long and flowing curls are crowned with closely-woven roses. Her right hand holds a pear. The little Child is on her knees. With His right hand He grasps the border of her robe beneath her neck, in an attitude like that of Raphael's Panshanger Madonna. Over her head two floating angels hold a regal crown. She sits in a "garden enclosed," behind which is a lovely landscape.

III.

THE MADONE NOURRICE.

"Matris habet gremium,
Quem et Patris solium;
Virgo natum consolatur
Et ut Deum veneratur."
— Petr. Verab. *De Nativ Domini.*

The vast majority of the Italian Madonnas painted after the beginning of the fifteenth century fall under this third type, in which the Virgin is neither woe-stricken nor enthroned, but is simply the type of Divine Motherhood. Often, as in Botticelli's tondo in our Gallery, she is giving her breast to the Holy Infant.

"Matris alitur intactae
Puer Deus sacro lacte
Res stupenda saeculis."

Our chief specimens of the Mother and Child may be furnished by two very different, but almost contemporary painters, — Raphael (1483–1520)[1] and Bernardino Luini (1475?–1533?). It would, however, be ungrateful not to allude first to what Morelli calls the "chaste God-fraught Madonnas" of Perugino. They are placed by Perugino in landscapes with a calm heaven, and sweet light, and silver water, and tender foliage, "which, in his pictures, heighten the mood awakened in us by his mar-

[1] "Rafael hat einen Zauber der Linie, eine Welle, ein Oval der Köpfe, ein Neigen, Beugen des Hauptes und Halses, eine Zeichnung der Figur, der Hand, und darin einen Ausdruck himmlischer Liebe . . . die ihm nur eigen ist, so nicht wiederkehren kann." — Vischer.

tyrs pining after Paradise." We have in our National Gallery his best Madonna (No. 288), painted as an altar-piece for the Certosa or Carthusian Monastery of Pavia. Its priceless beauty surely refutes the unworthy sneer of Michael Angelo, that Perugino was a mere "blockhead in art" (*goffo nell' arte*). In this picture the Virgin adores the Infant Christ, whom an angel presents to her, while three others sing in the clouds above.

Perugino.

RAPHAEL.

Raphael's artistic life falls into three periods. In all three of these he produced Madonnas of sovereign loveliness, and we may well wonder at —

> "Her, San Sisto names, and her Foligno,
> Her, that visits Florence in a vision,
> Her, that's left with lilies in the Louvre,
> Seen by us and all the world in circle." [1]

1. In the Umbrian or Peruginesque period of his career, his beautiful, tender, and plastic genius was still deeply influenced by the impress of his father, Giovanni Santi, and his master Perugino.

2. In the Florentine period (1504–1508) he came under the freer influences and less mannered studies of the

[1] Browning, *One Word More.*

Renaissance. The first Madonna which he painted in this epoch was the exquisite *Madonna del Granduca*, also called *del Viaggio*, because the Grand Duke Ferdinand III. took it with him wherever he went. It was painted in 1504, and still shews the heavy eyelid — what Giovanni Santi calls the "*santo onesto e grave ciglio*," which we see also in the pictures of Francia and Perugino.[1]

3. In his Roman period (1508–1520), Raphael attained to the culmination of his artistic power, but lost much of his religious expressiveness.

Casa Conestabile Madonna. (Raphael.)

Speaking now of the easel pictures of the Madonna and Child alone, we may notice, as specimens of the Umbrian

[1] Karoly, *The Paintings of Florence*, p. 78.

period, the Berlin and Conestabile Madonnas; of the Florentine period, the Panshanger, the Bridgewater, and the *Madonna del Granduca;* and of the Roman period, the *Madonna dei Candelabri* and *della Sedia.*

1. In the Casa Conestabile Madonna (here reproduced), the manner of Perugino will be at once recognised. The mountains are, perhaps, copied from those near the Lake of Thrasymene. The picture has all the glory of clear sky, pure air, and holy reverence. The Child leans over the open book in the Virgin's hand, and the Virgin bends modestly, almost timidly, over Him. She is of the Umbrian type, sweet, chaste, reverent, rather than specially beautiful.

2. The Bridgewater and Panshanger Madonnas, both exquisite, mark the beginning of transition, and express more of simple humanity, less of the divine ideal.[1]

3. The *Madonna della Sedia* of the Roman period proves decisively that the tones of technical skill have begun to predominate over deeper feelings. In that famous picture we have a lovely contadina with her child, and little more. The devotional character of the Umbrian School has entirely disappeared.[2] The new Roman type of beauty which he had now adopted, was more sensuous, but differed for the worse from the older and purer Umbrian type of his youth. Raphael had by that time attained to a power of execution almost perfect, as well as to a supreme sense of beauty. He could paint, perhaps, the most beautiful picture in the world, — the great *Madonna di San Sisto*, with all its indescribable, magical impressiveness of heavenly beauty. But in general, "he could think of the Madonna now very calmly, with no desire to pour out the treasures of earth at her feet, or cover her brows with

[1] To this period also belong *La Belle Jardinière* (Paris), and the *Madonna del Baldacchino* (Florence).

[2] See Kugler, II. 376; Müntz, *Raphael*, p. 392; Gruyer, *Vierges de Raphael*. I am very far indeed from regarding it as Hawthorne did, as "the most beautiful picture in the world." To the third period belong the *Madonna del Passeggio* (Vienna); *del Divino Amore* (Naples); *di Foligno* (Rome); *del Pesce* (Madrid).

the golden shafts of heaven. He could think of her as an available subject for the display of transparent shadows, skilful tints, and scientific foreshortenings — as a fair woman, forming, if well painted, a pleasant piece of furniture for the corner of a boudoir, and best imagined by combination of the beauties of the prettiest contadinas."[1]

To Raphael's third Roman period belongs the Garvagh Madonna. It is sometimes called the Aldobrandini Madonna, from the family to which it belonged, and the *Madonna del Giglio* (of the pink), from the flower which the little Baptist, with his cross of reeds, has just given to the Infant Christ. The picture has all Raphael's sweetness, but it is impossible not to see that simple grace and beauty and technical skill are more thought of than devotion. There is nothing except the nimbi round the heads to distinguish it from any human scene.

Bernardino Luini was a truly exquisite painter, some of whose best works — for instance, the *Christ Disputing with the Doctors* in our National Gallery, and the *Vanity and Modesty* in the Sciarra Colonna Palace at Rome — have been attributed to Leonardo da Vinci, by whom, whether he was ever Leonardo's pupil or not, he was deeply influenced. If he did not equal Leonardo in consummate genius, he surpassed him not only in the multitude of his pictures, but also in the winning loveliness, in the pure and holy spirit of peace, which breathe through them all.

[1] Kugler admits that in most of Raphael's later Madonnas "we no longer *perceive the tender enthusiasm, the earnestness, and fervour of youth*. They are not glorified, holy forms, which compel us to adore, but the most interesting moments of domestic life, when the sports of graceful children attract the delighted observations of parents." See, on the baneful influence of Raphael on late Renaissance art, Ruskin, *Modern Painters*, III. 65. Yet it must be added that the *Sistine Madonna* transcends criticism. It exercises a spell on all who see it. The little angel children, so full of divine loveliness and childish wonder, seem to have been specially introduced by the painter to make the pathos of the picture less painfully overpowering.

One of his most charming works is the *Madonna of the Rose-trellis* in the Brera Gallery at Milan. The Virgin is a mortal woman of lowly rank and poor dress, whose long tresses fall over her shoulders beneath her snood.

Madonna Nourrice. (Luini.)

The influence of Leonardo is visible in the type chosen, and also in the expression, though Luini almost entirely emancipates himself from the maddening mystery of that Sphinx-like smile which Leonardo introduced into his *La Gioconda*. Luini was one of those men who, being humble, could not be but susceptible to the impression of Leonardo's myriad-minded genius; but if he learnt from him he im-

proved upon him, and gave to the faces of his saints a penitence, a fervour, a rapture, which was beyond the zeal of Leonardo's pencil, and perhaps not in accordance with the bent of his mind. Even when we can point most clearly to his master's spell over him, we can see that he knows how to simplify, and soften, and diffuse over his canvas a hallowing atmosphere, proving himself to be a painter full of power, feeling, and independence, who gave back a fresh influence for every influence he received.

The Virgin is seated in front of a trellis which occurs in not a few mediæval Madonnas, as in Botticelli's *Virgin and Child* (N. G., No. 220), and in that by Girolamo Dei Libri (No. 748), and in Francia's lovely *Madonna of the Rose-trellis* at Munich, and in Martin Schongauer's at Colmar. This has been thought to imply a reference to the verse "A Garden enclosed is my sister, my spouse,"[1] as well as to the more general conceptions that Christ is the Rose of Sharon, and that all things beautiful bloom in the Garden of His peace. The rose is frequently introduced into these Madonna pictures because the Virgin was the Rosa Cœli, as Dante sings—

> "Quivi è la rosa in che 'l Verbo divino
> Carne si fece: e quivi sono i' gigli
> Al cui odor s'apprese 'l buon cammino."[2]

It mattered not whether the roses were red or white, for the former would symbolize the Virgin's ardent love, and the other her stainless chastity. Both were connected with the legend of her sorrows and her glory. Sir John Mandeville tells us how the Holy Maiden of Bethlehem "blamed with wrong and sclaundered with fornication, was demed to the Dethe, and as the Fyre beganne to brenne about hire, sche made hire Preyers to oure Lord, that as sche was not gylty of that Synne, that he wold helpe hire, and make it to be known to alle men of His mercyfulle grace. And when sche hadde thus seyd, down was the Fyre

[1] *Song of Solomon*, iv. 12. [2] *Parad.*, xxiii. 73–75.

quenched and oute, and the Brenden that weren brennynge became Red Roseres, and the Brenden that weren not kyndled becomen white Roseres fulle of Roses. And these weren the first Roseres of Roses both white and red, that ever any man saughe. And thus was the Mayden saved by the grace of God."[1]

Botticelli's special fondness for roses may also have had its influence over Luini. He paints them as no other painter can do, "flowering on the garden bushes behind his Virgins, or wreathed in garlands by attendant cherubs, falling in showers on the shore where Venus sets her foot, crowning the brows and decking the white robes of Spring, massed in great handfuls of red and white by sportive Loves, or wafted to and fro by angel-choirs as they dance on the clouds of heaven."[2] His Madonna in the Uffizi is shaped like the corolla of an opening rose.

The Child Christ in Luini's picture is one of those noble types which no painter has surpassed. Divine in His enchanting Humanity, He leans on one side, and grasps with His right hand the stem of a columbine which grows in a vase by His side. Perhaps the triple leaves of the flower may have a symbolic meaning. The face has all the indescribable charm not only of its own serene beauty, but because "God Himself seems to shine through its tender lineaments." Mongeri rightly says of Luini, "*La sua pittura è parola figurata.*"

With this Madonna of Luini may be compared his exquisite *Madonna of the Lily* in the Albani Palace at Rome, which used to be attributed to Leonardo da Vinci.

Another Rose-garden Madonna is in the Munich Gallery. It is by Francia, and is "a gem of colour and sentiment." The Virgin is in a grassy garden separated from the pure and quiet landscape by a low hedge of roses. The naked Child lies on her mantle, which is outspread on the grassy

[1] Sir John Mandeville, *Voyages and Travailes*, p. 84, quoted by Lord Lindsay.

[2] Julia Cartwright, *Portfolio*, XIII. 58.

sward, and looks up at her and blesses her with His little hand. The Virgin, with her palms folded across her breast, gazes down at Him a little sadly and seems about to sink upon her knees.[1]

There is yet another picture of this kind which is in the Cologne Museum, — the *Madonna aus Rosenlaube*, — which is the gem of the school of "Master Steffan." "The undressed Child sits with royal dignity in the Virgin's lap, and she gazes down at Him in absorbed contemplation, as though it were solely in His honour that she had decked herself in gold and jewels." On the flowery grass around her are seated four charming young angels with harp and regal and mandolins. Behind her, others lean over masses of flowers and fruit; one of these is plucking a rose from the trellis; another offers a fruit to Christ. At the corner two cherubs are drawing back the curtain, and above the Virgin's head, in a medallion filled with little cherubs, God the Father gives His blessing, and the Dove descends.[2]

Most of Albrecht Dürer's Madonnas belong to this type. "In all his representations of the Mother of God," says Professor Thausing, "he has placed her directly and uniquely in connexion with the Infant Jesus, and as deriving all her importance from Him. She is nearly always occupied in some way or other with Him. When sur-

[1] It is reproduced in Woltmann and Woermann, II. 418.

[2] Given in Woltmann, II. 95. "An early seat of activity in painting was also Nüremberg; but that art reaches during the Middle Ages its highest level in the Rhineland, and notably and admittedly in pious and opulent Cologne. Here two masters especially stand forth in the close of the fourteenth and the beginning of the fifteenth centuries: Meister Wilhelm, and, after him, Meister Stephan Lochner, both artists of a high order. Great suavity and dignity marked their art — an art which reflected the mystic fervour that reigned in those days at Cologne. It was an art from which character and individualization were almost wholly absent, and of which the unreal aspect was emphasized by the habitual omission of any indications of sky or landscape, and by the relief of the figures against a background of gold, often stamped with a richly decorative pattern." — Sir Frederic Leighton.

rounded by angels or saints, her attention is exclusively bestowed upon the Child. This subordination of the Virgin is founded no less on a particular theological tendency than on the abstract character of the German mind. Dürer's Virgin has none of the independence, none of the grace and material charm, found in the Virgins of the Italian masters. Even the aureole is after a time laid aside. She is a simple Nüremburg mother, such as might be met with every day in that town. She has the look of a worthy German matron, even down to the reticule and bunch of keys. Sometimes she sits spinning and reclining in the workshop of Joseph the carpenter; sometimes reading in the midst of a landscape surrounded by the gentle animal life of the North, or by busy little angels. And these little angels are, like the Child Jesus, genuine, playful children, without any premature wisdom or precocious sentimentality. Dürer's Virgin knows but one sentiment, — that of maternal love. She suckles her son with a calm feeling of happiness, she gazes upon Him with admiration as He lies upon her lap, she caresses Him and presses Him to her bosom without a thought whether it is becoming to her or whether she is being admired. Therefore she is not, like the Virgin of the Italian masters, endowed by Dürer with the eternal youth of the old divinities. As she draws near the end of life, she becomes old and decrepit. If to some this want of beauty and of grace should appear a subject of regret, let them not for that reason account it a reproach to Dürer and to German art." [1]

In Raphael's Roman period began the decline of deep religious sincerity. In Correggio we mark the fatal downward course which substituted grace and sidelong prettinesses, and sensuous charm, and unidealized humanity for the holy unrealities of a devotional ideal. That his *Virgin of the Basket*, here reproduced, is a lovely picture no one can dispute; but there is not one gleam of religious feeling in it, nor anything sacred except the name. In

[1] *Albrecht Dürer*, by Moritz Thausing (Eng. trans.), II. 74.

such a picture Art follows her own devices with scarcely more than the pretence of being the handmaid of religion. This exquisite little *Vierge au Panier* (*Madonna della Cesta*), painted in 1520, has been called "an epitome of Correggio's art." The qualities of his greatness are mainly technical. He excels in luminosity, in harmonious colouring, in foreshortening, in giving the effect of aerial perspective, in overflowing vitality, in the rendering of flesh tints, and of all physical beauty. But he degraded the aims of Art by some of his mythological classicalism, and we are authoritatively told that the "influence he exercised on later Art was more baneful than otherwise."[1]

This picture is an exquisite domestic scene. At the Virgin's right is an osier work-basket from which it derives its name. She is dressing the lovely, lively, wilful, golden-haired child. She has succeeded in getting His right arm into one sleeve, but just as she has done so, His attention is vehemently attracted by something towards which He is looking and stretching out His hand. She holds the little left hand in hers, and looks down at the Child with a proud smile of love, while she thinks how hard it will be to finish her task of checking His impulsive movements. In the background Joseph is working with a plane, but otherwise there is nothing whatever to remind us that this is a sacred subject and the shadowing forth of an ineffable mystery.[2] We have, indeed, perfect beauty, and that, as Mr. Browning tells us in the person of his Fra Lippi, is —

"about the best thing God invents."

[1] *National Gallery*, 23. A very pleasing Madonna by Correggio is the *Madonna della Scala*, from the ladder introduced on one side. "Other men have nobler or more numerous gifts, but as a painter of the art of laying on colour so as to be lovely, Correggio stands alone." — Ruskin.

[2] Probably the Virgin was his wife, the Child his son Pomponio. "When a nation's culture has reached its culminating point," says Morelli, "we see everywhere, in daily life as well as in literature and art, that *grace* comes to be valued more than character. So it was in Italy during the closing decades of the fifteenth century and the opening ones of the sixteenth." — *Italian Masters*, p. 124.

MADONNA DELLA CESTA *Correggio.*

From the Picture in the National Gallery, London.

But there is no hushed reverence, no deep insight. This is not a picture which the painter could have thought of painting, as Angelico sometimes painted his, upon his knees. Andrea del Sarto, as we have seen, ventures to represent the Saviour as a simple Infant in all the winning feebleness of infancy, and with no touch of the Divine to differentiate Him from other children; but Correggio went even farther than this, and in his Holy Families "does not shrink from investing the Holy Child with impetuous vivacity, — nay, more, with impish roguishness."

The next Madonna which I will notice is by GUERCINO. It is at Milan, and is known as the *Madonna dell' Uccello*, from the bird on the Virgin's finger.

Giovanni Francesco Barbieri — nicknamed Guercino, from his squint — was born at Cento near Bologna, in 1591, and was the son of a wood-carrier. After studying at Bologna and Venice, he went to Rome and fell under the unfortunate influence of the coarse and violent Caravaggio. Michael Angelo Amerighi, called Caravaggio from his birthplace, was born in 1569, and was the founder of the Naturalists, so called from their revolt against the insipid and artificial mannerism of the imitators of Correggio. The school was ruined by the fatal error of supposing that there is more naturalness in what is vulgar, ugly, repellent, and commonplace than in the loftier ideals of the imagination, and in things lovely, true, pure, and of good report.

Under this influence Guercino became the chief leader of the school known as the *Tenebrosi*, from the dark tone of colouring which they affected. In 1642, after the death of Guido Reni, he went to Bologna, and joining the Eclectic School of Bolognese painters, became an imitator of Guido, but with no success.

The introduction of birds into pictures of the Madonna is very common, and we have instances of it in the gold-

finch of Cima's picture in the National Gallery (No. 634); in the swallow of Carlo Crivelli's *Madonna della Rondine* (No. 724); the goldfinches on the steps of the throne in Benozzo Gozzoli's *Virgin and Child Enthroned* (283);[1] the magpie on the roof in Piero dei Franceschi's *Nativity* (No. 905), and the goldfinch in the Child's hand in one of

Madonna Nourrice. (Bissolo.)

Raphael's earliest Madonnas at Berlin. It is seen also in the charming picture of Bissolo at Venice (often attributed to Bellini), of which an engraving is here given. The

[1] Goldfinches are very common in pictures by Botticelli and by earlier painters. The red feathers on the bird's wings were regarded as symbolical of the wounded side of Christ.

finest instance is of course to be seen in Raphael's *Madonna del Cardellino*, the *Mater pulcræ dilectionis*, where the Infant Christ, tenderly stroking the head of the little bird in the hands of the Baptist, seems already to be uttering that supreme revelation of God's love, "Are not five sparrows sold for two farthings, and not one of them falleth to the ground without your Father?"

How widely different is the *motif* of the picture of Guercino! Here a peasant mother, whose beauty is of the most mundane and ordinary type, holds the bird on her finger. Its legs are tied by a string which is in the hand of the Child, and mother and Child do not seem to have one thought in their souls beyond the triviality of the passing amusement. This Virgin is neither fair enough to worship, nor divine enough to love.

Yet Guercino could hardly have sunk to the depths of irreverence and inanity revealed in Barocci's *Madonna of the Cat* in our National Gallery (No. 29).[1] Barocci, born at Urbino in 1528, was professedly a religious painter, an imitator of Raphael and Correggio.[2] Here, too, the bird is a goldfinch, which the little St. John — an extremely unattractive child — is holding up in his right hand, while he leans against the Virgin's knee. The little bird is struggling wildly to get free; and no wonder, for, at St. John's feet is a cat with outstretched neck and uplifted paw, which St. John is teazing by holding the bird above its reach! A vulgar Virgin with her hand outstretched is calling the attention of the Holy Child to this intellectual treat, and a St. Joseph leans over the group highly amused and equally absorbed with them in the wretched incident.[3]

[1] Guilio Romano's *Madonna della Catina*, in the Dresden Gallery, is on a par with Barocci's in the absence of all religious feeling.

[2] Sir Joshua Reynolds says that he falls under the old criticism, "that his figures looked as if they fed upon roses."

[3] Bellori calls the picture a *scherzo*, but no painter has the right to play with such a subject.

Surely, religious feeling could hardly sink into lower degradation! The fault of Barocci's picture was perhaps less due to his own deficiencies than to those of his age. The artist seems to have been an amiable and unfortunate man. At Rome he was nearly killed, and his health ruined for life, by the poison administered to him by jealous rivals.

Another Holy Family in our National Gallery will illustrate no less forcibly the change of religious feeling. It is that of RUBENS. How much religious sentiment it is likely to express, we see in the fact that it is a group of Rubens' own family. In the older painters this "playing at being a Holy Family" would have been impossible. It is true that portraiture had been gradually introduced into these sacred subjects, — at first only those of donors and subordinate actors in the scene, — but whenever a Virgin was painted from a model, the model had been at least idealized. Leonardo da Vinci had placed the Child Jesus on the knees of a Virgin painted from Cecilia Gallerani, the mistress of Ludovico Moro; but does not this fact alone suffice to prove that his artistic inspiration was rendered turbid by very earthly elements?

There are numberless Madonnas of Murillo and the Spanish artists. Perhaps the best is that by Cano (b. 1601), who is called "the Michael Angelo of Spain." It is at Seville, and is known as *Our Lady of Bethlehem*. "In serene celestial beauty it is excelled by no image of the Blessed Mary ever devised in Spain."[1]

The last Madonna of this type which I shall here notice is again by CARLO DOLCI. In the seventeenth century, the religious feeling no longer reigned in Italy in its all pure and intense simplicity. Religion, like art, had become manneristic and artificial, exaggerated and senti-

[1] Sir W. Stirling Maxwell, *Annals of the Spanish Artists*, II. 803.

mental. Carlo Dolci was avowedly a religious painter, but the wholly unconscious unreality in a self-conscious piety is observable in all his pictures. If we compare this Madonna with those of virile painters like Giovanni Bellini or Andrea Mantegna, we see how little the depth of religious feeling can be replaced by posturing affectations, exaggerated ecstasies, and simpering prettiness.[1]

Thus, incontestably, does Art reflect all the moods of religious life from its dawn in glad and unquestioning enthusiasm, to its decadence in affectation, unreality, formalism, and routine.

[1] Carlo Dolci "aurait pu faire de belles choses, si une sorte de quiétisme ne l'eût conduit à exprimer l'anéantissement de l'âme dans les masques blêmes, qui ont la transparence de la cire et tous les symptômes de la mort mystique." — C. Blanc.

IV.

THE VIRGIN AND CHILD WITH THE INFANT BAPTIST.

"While young John runs to greet
The greater Infant's feet,
The Mother, standing by with trembling passion
Of devout admiration,
Beholds th' engaging mystic play and solemn adoration.

* * * * * * * *

But at her side
An Angel doth abide
With such a perfect joy
As no dim doubts alloy;
An intuition,
A glory, an amenity,
Passing the dark condition
Of poor humanity,
As if he surely knew
All the blest wonders should ensue."

— Charles Lamb.

Among the infinite varieties of treatment of which the central *motif* of the Virgin with the Child Jesus was susceptible, many of the loveliest are furnished by the pictures in which only the infant St. John is also introduced, as in many of the great pictures of Raphael, so intimately known to all. Such are the *Madonna del Passeggio*, the *Belle Jardinière*, *La Perla*, and above all, the exquisite *Del Cardellino*.

Turning to other painters, we must feel when we look at Leonardo da Vinci's *Madonna of the Rocks*, in our National Gallery, that we have fully reached the age in which the Renaissance culminated and in which more is

thought of producing a scientific picture than of deepening Christian devotion.

The Virgin is kneeling in a flowery place between dark rocks of basalt.[1] The tradition that a cavern was the scene of the Nativity is perhaps derived from Isa. xxxiii. 16,[2] but is found as early as the days of Justin Martyr.[3] She is laying her right hand on the shoulder of the little golden-haired St. John, who adores the Infant Christ. Her left hand is outspread above the head of her Son. The Child Christ is seated on the ground supported by an angel who points to the St. John. He blesses his little companion with two uplifted fingers. Through a chasm in the distant rocks — which are quite impossible in their character — flows a broad river. The Virgin wears that inexplicable, enchanting, mysterious smile by which Leonardo first beguiled Italian Art. There is feeling and mystery in this great picture, on which the sonnet of

Leonardo da Vinci.

[1] Mr. Gilbert conjectures that both the shimmering light and the strange rocks may be a shuddering reminiscence of some stalactite cavern which Leonardo had visited; perhaps that of Oliero, near Bassano.

[2] Where the LXX. has οὗτος οἰκήσει ἐν σπηλαίῳ ὑψηλῷ πέτρας ἰσχυρᾶς.

[3] Just. Mart. *Dial. c. Tryph.* c. 78, ἐν σπηλαίῳ τινι συνεγγὺς τῆς κώμης. Comp. Orig. *c. Cels.* I. 51.

Dante Rossetti has perhaps furnished the most sympathetic comment: —

> "Mother, is this the darkness of the end,
> The shadow of Death? and is that outer sea
> Infinite imminent Eternity?
>
> * * * * * * *
>
> Mother of Grace, the pass is difficult,
> Keen as these rocks, and the bewildered souls
> Throng in, like echoes blindly shuddering through."

In the Louvre is Leonardo's well-known *Madonna with St. Anne*. They are seated at the rocky edge of a little pool, in a landscape with mountains in the distance, and a fine tree on the right. Both St. Anne and the Virgin, who is upon her knees, are looking down at the Holy Child, who has one leg over the back of a lamb, which He is holding by the ears. The lamb and the Child's attitude at once recall Luini's *Madonna dell' Agnello* and his *Infant Christ with the Lamb*. It is not easy to be sure which of the two painters borrowed the idea from the other. In both it is rendered with consummate beauty.[1] "Leonardo," says Morelli, "was perhaps the most richly gifted man that Mother Nature ever made. He was the first who tried to express the smile of inward happiness, the sweetness of the soul."

It is doubtful whether Leonardo, or Michael Angelo, or Raphael in his Roman period, produced the deepest effect on Art, but it is certain that the influence of all three, as a combined whole, did much to alter the aims of Christian painting and to divert into other channels its single-hearted devoutness.

The one painter who chiefly influenced Michael Angelo was probably Luca Signorelli. There is a *Virgin and Child* by him in the Uffizi Gallery at Florence, in which he has introduced four naked figures into the background out of mere delight in painting the nude, and Angelo, as

[1] The picture is reproduced in Woltmann and Woermann, II. 559.

we shall see, imitated him in this first deviation from religious propriety.

In our Gallery is a Madonna by Michael Angelo, which, like so many of his works, is unfinished. It is in tempera, and Michael Angelo professed to despise oil painting as "only fit for women and idle people, like Fra Bastiani (Sebastian del Piombo)."[1] The Madonna was too tender a subject for his sombre and statuesque genius. Raphael, in his short life, painted at least forty Madonnas, Michael Angelo only seven, and only one in his maturity. Had the Madonna of our Gallery been finished, it would certainly have been a powerful painting. It was perhaps left unfinished, when in 1490 the painter went from Florence to Rome. Two angels, superb, unwinged youths, stand in symmetrical positions on either side. Their arms are entwined round each other's necks. They are partly undraped, and are studying the words of Scripture, which saddens them with prophecies. The figures shew the influence of Donatello and Luca della Robbia. The Virgin, who sits sad and pensive in the midst, has also an open book on her knees, but her Infant Son — to whom the little St. John calls the spectator's notice — is preventing her from reading it. Dante Rossetti interprets the picture differently: —

> "Turn not the Prophet's page, O Son! He knew
> All that Thou hast to suffer, and hath writ.
> Not yet Thine hour of knowledge."

Both the children are powerful but unpleasing, nor is there anything divine about either them or the Virgin. It is remarkable that Michael Angelo was one of the first, if not the first, to break the old tradition of inseparable conjunction between the Mother and the Child. With him, in this and other pictures, the Child is no longer on the Virgin's knees, or encircled by her arms, and He is no longer a helpless infant, but a strong boy.[2]

[1] "Arte da donna, e de persone aglate ed infingarde."

[2] Sprenger, in Dohme, II. 28. There is a picture not unlike this at Nantes, by Ghirlandajo.

Another of Angelo's Madonnas, which is neither religious nor domestic, is in the Uffizi at Florence. The powerful figure of the Virgin is kneeling, and she seems to be handing Jesus over her right shoulder into the arms of the aged St. Joseph. The little St. John is walking in a road below the scene, and looks joyously back at the Holy Child. Seated on the wall behind on either side are five naked

Virgin and Child. (Michael Angelo.)

youths — beautiful and powerful figures, but wholly unconnected with the picture, and worse than meaningless. They are a fatal indication that the painter wished chiefly, as Vasari says, "mostrare maggiormente l' arte sua essere

grandissima," to show how completely he had mastered the laws of perspective (to which so much attention had been directed by Paolo Uccello), and also his power to represent the nude.

We must here mention Raphael's *Madonna del Cardellino*, to my mind the most enchanting of all his works. It is the first of his pictures which marks the transition from his Umbrian to his Florentine manner (about 1507). It shows traces of what Raphael had learnt from Leonardo and Fra Bartolommeo. The landscape is still predominantly Umbrian, but shews an idealized Florence in the distance. The goldfinch was supposed to be emblematic of the Passion, from the red streaks upon its wings. The Holy Child is standing between His mother's knees, listening to the book in which she has been reading. The little Baptist is a splendid boy with crisp curly hair; he is girded with the leather girdle round his mantle of camel's skin. His little wooden hermit's water-dish is tied at his back. He has caught a goldfinch and is running up with impetuous eagerness to shew it to his little playmate. He is holding it tenderly enough, but as though in fear lest he should hurt it. Jesus is looking at him with heavenly gentleness and holding His bent hand over the head of the bird, as though He were full of the thought, "Not one of these shall fall to the ground without your Father." The Virgin, disturbed from her reading, turns round to look at the child Baptist, and presses her hand lovingly on his naked shoulder. The Virgin and the little Baptist have circular nimbi; the Divine Child has no nimbus, and does not need one, such is the supremacy indicated in His features and look. But minute inspection shews that golden rays once radiated around His head. In the foreground are some exquisitely painted white flowers.[1]

[1] This glorious picture was broken to pieces by the subsidence of the house of Lorenzo Nasi, but was most skilfully repaired by his son. As we have been speaking of Correggio, Michael Angelo, and Raphael, the reader may like to see the admirable remarks of Morelli about them.

A frequent mode of treating the Virgin and the two children was to paint Jesus sleeping, and the Virgin lifting up her finger to warn the Infant Baptist not to awake Him. Such a picture was called *Il Silenzio*. In our Gallery (No. 1227) we have a specimen of its treatment by Marcello Venusti, from a well-known design by Michael Angelo.

The supremest works of Art can never be quite adequately copied, and every one who has looked long and lovingly at Luini's *Madonna dell' Agnello* at Lugano, sees

He says that "to Correggio fell the enviable lot to evoke the purest, fullest harmony from the strings already struck by Leonardo, by Giorgione, and by Lorenzo Lotto; one and the same feeling animated them all, and found expression in their works. It was a stage in the development of the human mind. The mind, emancipating itself from the swaddling bands of mediæval thought, gazed with artless, vivid joy at Man, whole and free, as the Greek eye saw him long ago. It is this triumphant sense of having found again the true, living, free Man which speaks to us from the works of the great Italian masters in the first decades of the sixteenth century. This sense of liberty achieved is what inspires the figures both of Correggio and Michael Angelo, the two chief representatives of this attitude of mind in pictorial art, widely as their characters might differ in other respects. Michael Angelo had grown up in a rich and splendid but politically distracted city, at a time when moral character was on the decline. With his proud nature, he soon became disgusted with the want of principle and the idle pleasure-hunting of his contemporaries. Allegri, on the contrary, spent his days in a small provincial town among Benedictine monks. As Correggio was endowed by nature with utter sweetness of soul, Michael Angelo's heroic temper led him mainly to body forth the noble pride of a free nature, the bitter scorn of all that is base, unprincipled, and vain. Out of his Titanic figures, the emancipated mind of man, as if in full consciousness of God-given strength, looks down with Olympian pride on the chains of bound humanity. His cast of mind belonged to the age of Dante. All minds which came in contact with his were subjugated by him, or attracted out of their natural orbit; and thus through him the decline of Art became still more precipitate than it would have been without him. Correggio operated on his unhappy imitators more indirectly through the Carracci. Between Michael Angelo and Correggio the divine Raphael stands midway, as the most honoured, most calm, most perfect of the artists, the only one who in this respect was the equal of the Greeks. Happy the land that has such men to offer to the world!" — *Italian Masters*, pp. 124–127.

how completely copies fail to convey its charm.[1] At the right is a sweet little St. John, whose reed cross throws its shadow behind him. He is dressed in a scanty tunic of white wool, which turns upward at the edges, and is a strong child with curling auburn hair, and a smile which

Holy Family. (Fil. Lippi.)

every copy completely vulgarizes. He is pointing at the Child Christ, who is trying to mount an innocent lamb, —the emblem of His own sinless sacrifice. One of His little hands grasps the lamb by the ears, and He looks upward at His mother. A face more divine in its inno-

[1] A water-colour copy was taken many years ago for the Arundel Society, but they felt it to be so inadequate that they have never published it.

cent childhood was never painted even by Raphael, much less by any other painter.

The Virgin, standing between the Children with a look of bright but pensive humility, and a pathetic half-smile, looks tenderly towards her Son. Her hands are laid lightly on the shoulders of both children, — the Divine and the Human, —who have exchanged their emblems. Her robe is of rose-colour, her mantle blue. The transparent veil which conceals her wavy tresses, half covers her forehead and floats delicately over her dress. There is in this picture an indescribable enchantment of innocence and holiness, — of virginal innocence, of sweetness touched by an indefinable pathos. In Luini we see the old traditions of religious feeling surviving the spell of the influences of Leonardo; of artistic skill consummate in perfection, but unaffected by any taint of worldliness and pride.

It is unnecessary to give further illustrations of this subject, but great religious pictures are so rare in the later centuries, that I may mention one.

There are very few modern Madonnas at which we can look with equanimity. There is about most of them a coldness, a lack of spontaneity, a self-conscious attempt to reproduce a state of feeling which has passed away. Even Sir Joshua Reynolds failed in his *Holy Family* almost as completely as Hogarth. There is, however, one modern Madonna which is entirely pleasing. It is that by Angelica Kauffman in the lovely Colleoni Chapel at Bergamo. It is to the left of the altar and is protected by a curtain. The little Jesus and the young Baptist — both of them lovely children — are occupied with a lamb to whom the Baptist is offering a little wooden bowl of water. The Virgin bends lovingly over them, and behind her St. Joseph is plucking a pomegranate from the branch of the tree. The *motif* of the picture and its accomplishment make this one of the best Madonnas which the eighteenth century produced.

Book IV (*continued*).

HOLY FAMILIES, CONVERSATIONS, AND ENTHRONED MADONNA WITH SAINTS.

"The mother, with the Child,
Whose tender winning arts,
Have to His little arms beguiled
So many wounded hearts."
—M. Arnold.

"Qual si lamenta, perchè qui si moia,
Per viver colassù, non vide quive
Lo refrigerio dell' eterna ploia."
—Dante, *Parad.* XIV. 25–27.

"Die Phantasie ist die lebendige Quelle, die durch eigene Kraft sich emporarbeitet, durch eigene Kraft in so reichen, so frischen, so reinen Strahlen aufschiesst." — LESSING.

"Faithful religious painters interpret to those of us who can read them, so far as they already see and know, the things that are for ever. '*Charity never faileth.*'

"And the one message they bear to us is the Commandment of the Eternal Charity, '*Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thine heart, and thy neighbour as thyself.*'

"And they teach us that whatever higher creatures exist between Him and us, we are also bound to know, and to love in their place and state, as they ascend and descend on the stairs of their watch and ward.

"The principal masters of this faithful religious school known to me are: Giotto, Angelico, Sandro Botticelli, Filippo Lippi, Luini, and Carpaccio."

— RUSKIN, *On the Old Road*, I. 340.

A *Santa Conversazione* in Art differs from a Madonna or a Holy Family, by the introduction of other saints, no matter what the age in which they lived. Such a picture is intended to express the idea of the Holy Catholic Church, as centred in the Person of the Redeemer, and based upon belief in the Incarnation. These paintings, therefore, express the same conception as the chapels dedicated to saints grouped round the apses of our cathedrals. The cruciform structure of the cathedral represents Christ upon the Cross; the Lady Chapel symbolizes the Virgin standing by the head of Christ; the radiating chapels represent the Holy Ones of God partaking in the glory of redemption.

Strictly speaking, the name *Santa Conversazione* only applies to pictures where the Virgin and Child are seated

in a landscape or garden with the saints, as though in the midst of them; but for convenience' sake I here speak of classes of pictures in which the saints are grouped around the Madonna and the Infant Christ. The fact that such pictures are only intended to express a general conception may serve to explain why — as for instance, in the Madonna di San Sisto, or the Ansidei Madonna — the saints who stand beside the Mother and Child, by no means always have their attention absorbed in contemplating the Divine Babe. They are sometimes turning in another direction, or are engaged in reading, or some other pursuit. They are not necessarily supposed to be present at the actual scene.

Among splendid early specimens of the enthroned Madonna, we may notice the *Maestà*, by Simone Martini, in the Palazzo Publico at Siena (1315). The Virgin in queenly array is seated on a rich Gothic throne among a throng of saints and angels, fifteen on either side. The Child stands on her knees and blesses. Two royal female martyrs — St. Ursula and St. Catherine — stand one on either side. On the marble before the steps of the throne kneel two angels, who hold up baskets of flowers, with joyous and earnest faces. Considering the early date at which it was produced, the picture is of surpassing merit.[1]

There is a very lovely terra cotta bas-relief by Andrea della Robbia (†1528) of the *Coronation of the Virgin*, over the altar of the Church dell' Osservanza, in Siena. She bends lowly with folded hands before the majestic figure of her Son, while angels blow trumpets, and cherubs flutter around. Five saints stand below, one of whom, St. Stephen, with a stone in his hand, looks up with enraptured gaze. The *Annunciation*, on the predella below, is also a very charming work.[2]

The impression that the high merits of Giovanni Santi

[1] There is a wood-cut of the picture given in Dohme's series, p. 24.
[2] A wood-cut is given in Dohme, p. 12.

have been a little unfairly thrown into the shade by the glory of his matchless son, is confirmed by his *Madonna and Saints*, in a fresco of the Church of San Domenico at Cagli.[1] On one side of the Virgin's throne stand St. Peter and St. Francis; on the other side, St. Dominic, with his lily, and a fine St. John the Baptist. The picture is quite Umbrian, both in its elaborate symmetry and in the softness and sweetness of expression in the faces. From the centre of the Baldacchino, midway between the heads of the Virgin and the Child, a crown is hanging and a single candle burns before the throne. On one side a young angel bends his head and closes his palms in prayer; on the other stands his companion with folded arms. Both have long and flowing hair, and in the enchanting features of the one to the left, tradition points out the likeness of the boy Raphael.[2] In the upper part of the fresco is a Resurrection, in which the figures of the five sleeping soldiers, and the one who seems on the point of awakening, are rendered with great skill. "The composition of the lower portion is derived from the early *ancona* or altar-piece, in which the Virgin and Child occupied a central panel, and various holy personages separate compartments on either side of her. This artificial grouping was occasionally adopted to a late period by many even of the great masters of the Florentine School, and was not altogether abandoned by Raphael himself."[3]

There was a great *Coronation of the Virgin* by Albrecht Dürer, which was burnt at Munich in 1674, but is known by an old copy of Jobst Harrich. It has all Dürer's dignity and fervour, and as in others of his pictures, he

[1] It has been reproduced by the Arundel Society. See Förster, *Denkm. d. Mal.* III. Pl. 23; Woltmann and Woermann, II. 225.

[2] This angel is given in outline in Rosini, III. 132, and has been reproduced by the Arundel Society. "The boy," says Sir H. A. Layard, "was then nine years old; and in that gentle and beautiful face may perhaps be traced the features which his fond master Pietro, and he himself in manhood, not unfrequently portrayed."

[3] Sir H. A. Layard, *Giovanni Sanzio and his Fresco at Cagli*, 1850.

introduces his own figure in the background, carrying a tablet.[1]

Fra Filippo Lippi's *Coronation of the Virgin* in the Academy of Arts at Florence is one of his loveliest and most elaborate pictures, and must rank among the greatest works of the fifteenth century. It was painted in 1441 for the nunnery of San Ambrogio, in Florence. The Virgin, in bridal attire, kneels and prays before God the Father, who is represented (as by Van Eyck) with regal and Papal Crown. An angel is bending low on either side. In two circles to right and left of the arched reredos are circles which contain the Angel of the Annunciation and the Virgin with the Dove. In triple rows beside the throne are angels holding lilies. Their fair curls are crowned with roses, and saints are seated between their ranks. Below the throne stand bishops and saints of the Old and New Testaments, among whom Bishop Ambrose and St. John the Baptist are conspicuous, and monks and virgins also kneel among them. But the prominent figure here is a beautiful novice. Her features are of almost infantine sweetness, and she is unmarked by any of the insignia of a saint. Two children kneel before her; one opens his hands in admiration, her hand rests beneath the chin of the other. She looks out at the spectator with earnest gaze. Behind her a smiling angel, crowned with a rose garland, and with an expression almost of fun upon his features, holds his hand towards a Carmelite monk, — Fra Filippo himself, — who is praying at the feet of the Baptist. In the angel's other hand is a scroll on which is written, *Iste perfecit opus*.[2]

[1] Given in Woltmann and Woermann, II. 133.

[2] Legend says that the novice is Lucrezia Buti, whom Fra Filippo took from the nunnery, and who became his wife and the mother of Filippino. But the tradition, as far as Lucrezia is concerned, is certainly erroneous. The story about Lucrezia is referred to the year 1458 by a letter of Giovanni de' Medici. When the picture was begun she was not more than six years old.

CORONATION OF THE VIRGIN. *Fra Filippo Lippi.*

From the Picture in the Academy of Arts, Florence.

This is the picture described in the famous lines of Mr. Browning: —

> "God in the midst, Madonna and her Babe,
> Ringed by a bowery, flowery angel-brood,
> Lilies, and vestments, and white faces, sweet
> As puff on puff of grated orris-root . . .
> And there in the front, of course, a saint or two; —
> Saint Ambrose, who puts down in black and white,
> The convent's friends, and gives them a long day,
> And Job . . ."

Mr. J. A. Symonds says of this picture, that "the angels have no celestial quality of form or feature; their grace is earthly. The spirit breathed upon the picture is the loveliness of colour, quiet, yet glowing." Similarly, Woermann says "that there is in the picture no affectation of holiness, little ecclesiasticism, but rather a naïve and childlike piety combined with much desire for earthly beauty." The picture occupied Fra Filippo for five years, and it is impossible to believe that he would thus have introduced the pictures of himself and of Lucrezia Buti, had their relations been so scandalous as Vasari asserts.

In the Uffizi Madonna, two urchin-angels, one of whom looks out at the spectator with an expression of lovely playfulness, are handing the Divine Child to the Virgin, to whom He is stretching out His arms. But before she clasps Him in her arms, she folds her hands to Him in prayer. The angels of Fra Lippo, if less spiritually lovely than those of Fra Angelico, are even more humanly winning. Over this picture, says Mr. Symonds, "might be written, 'infinite riches in a little room.'"

This Madonna, too, is asserted to be Lucrezia Buti. But great doubts must hang over Vasari's scandals on that subject. It was in 1458 that Giovanni de' Medici wrote, "We have also laughed a good deal (*un pezzo*) over the escapade (*errore*) of Fra Filippo." There is no proof that this refers to his asserted abduction of Lucrezia, which, moreover, would have been a subject far too serious for

any one to laugh over. It seems to have been discovered that the name of Fra Filippo's wife was Spinetta Buti, not Lucrezia.[1]

[1] It is doubtful whether Vasari has not wronged Fra Lippo as much as he has wronged Andrea del Castagno.

Fra Filippo was born about 1406, of poor parents, and being left an orphan, was placed in the Carmelite Convent by an aunt. Here he showed his bent by scribbling *fantocci* over his books. He left the convent in 1431. The story that he was captured by Barbary pirates, and released for the skill which he shewed in sketching on the wall the head of the Moor to whom he had been sold as a slave, is probably a mere romance; and the anecdote that Cosmo de' Medici locked him up to finish his painting, and that he tore up his sheets and escaped into the street on loose adventures, is also very dubious. That in 1458 he eloped with and married Lucrezia — or rather, as critics have now discovered, her elder sister, Spinetta Buti — may be true. He was then forty-six, and the girl was twenty-four; she was a beautiful novice, or perhaps *ward* rather than novice, of the nuns of Sta. Margherita at Prato. Vasari's story is, that she sat as a Madonna, that he carried her away during an exhibition of the Virgin at Prato, and that Filippino Lippi was the son of this marriage. But if so, "he only did openly and bravely what the highest prelates in the Church did basely and in secret; also, he loved where they only lusted; and he has been proclaimed therefore by them, and too foolishly believed by us, to have been a shameful person." * But even this story is surrounded by difficulties. Lippo continues to call himself "Brother." The Pope certainly condoned his sin, or his error, or whatever it was, and is said to have sanctioned his marriage. His son Filippino erected him a monument at the expense of Lorenzo de' Medici. There is no evidence for the statement that he was poisoned by Lucrezia's relations. On August 13, 1439, he wrote a letter, in which he begs Piero de' Medici to send him some corn and wine, as it has pleased God to leave him "the poorest friar in Florence," and as he has charge of "six marriageable nieces, who cannot live without his means." In 1452 he was chaplain to a convent of nuns at San Giovannino at Florence, and in 1457 was rector in San Quirico at Legnaia Spoleto, and he continued to be employed on sacred subjects both at Prato and Spoleto. All this seems wholly inconsistent with Vasari's account of his life. The reader will find it hard to associate Fra Lippo's pictures and the portrait of himself as a grave and humble suppliant, which he introduces into some of them, with the bluff and rowdy hero whom Mr. Browning, following Vasari, depicts in his Fra Lippo Lippi.† Vasari, though so delightful a

* Ruskin, *Fors Clavigera*, XXII. 4.

† It must be remembered that the poem was written before the publication of the documents published by G. Milanesi, in his *Giornale Storico degli Archivi Toscani*, and Dr. Gaye's *Carteggio*.

Woermann says, with striking truth, that "Fra Filippo was the first to produce a class of pictures, of which the Florentine School was thenceforth an inexhaustible factory, till Raphael gave them their highest expression, — pictures, that is to say, of the Virgin and Child, with or without other figures, in which all that is mystical and theological disappears before the human and idyllic sentiments of maternal love and childlike innocence. The Madonna is always essentially Florentine; her hair is braided in the fashion of the day, with a snood or veil; the ideal feeling is soon altogether lost. Even the type of beauty ceases to be regular and conventional. Still she is charming, and the Infant is tenderly studied from nature. The angels and St. John are His playfellows, and beside the adolescent and clothed angels, naked infants — *putti*, the Italians call them — are introduced."

A typical and exquisite *Madonna and Saints*, in its simplest form, is furnished by the famous Giorgione in Castel-Franco.

The Virgin in this picture is seated on a stone screen, "in front of which a double plinth — equal in height to

writer, is not only careless and credulous, but is also constantly misled by "private interests, prejudices, and partial affections." It is certain that Fra Lippo never abandoned the religious habit, which yet he could hardly have retained had he been guilty of an offence as heinous as elopement with a nun. He calls himself *Frater* to the last, paints himself with the tonsure *alla fratesca*, and is recorded as *Frater Philippus* in the obituary of his monastery. Florence contended with Spoleto for the honour of possessing his remains. It is clear, therefore, that his brethren of the Carmine were by no means ashamed of him.

Whatever may be the unsolved mysteries of Fra Lippo's life, certain it is that he mainly devoted his art to the glory of the Virgin. He has still preserved some of the tenderness and sweetness of Fra Angelico, while he has added to it some of the skill and individuality of Masaccio. Doubtless he was a man of the warm temperament which so often accompanies glowing genius; but as far as we are able to disentangle the problems of his story, we have every reason to believe that he was a much better, and not a worse, man than many of the ecclesiastics of the day who held their heads high, and whose more veiled irregularities did not, in that age, lose them the respect of their contemporaries.

the stature of the foreground saints — projects. On the lower step of the plinth is a round with the scutcheon of the Costanzi. From the foot of the throne falls a striped carpet, overlaid by a green flowered damask rug. The high and narrow back of the seat sparkles with red and gold embroidery." The sky is cloudless, the landscape quiet and serene, the colour exquisite, the expression tender, the attitude graceful, the technical skill perfect. The Virgin, with a look far removed from all earthly things, carries on her knees the naked babe, who half sits, and half leans towards San Liberale, who stands with his right foot raised at the heel by a slight projection of the chequered floor. He stands with the helmet on his head, the dagger at his hip, the gloves in his hand, passive and almost feminine in features. . . . St. Francis to the right, points to the scar in his side, and shews the wounds on his hands; the rope round his waist, the cowl thrown off, the feet bare, and one of them also resting on the projecting edge of the floor.[1]

This picture is one of Giorgione's few indisputably genuine works; and Mr. Ruskin, though he has only seen the reproduction of it by the Arundel Society, says that "it unites every artistic quality for which the painting of Venice has been renowned, with a depth of symbolism and nobleness of manner exemplary of all that in any age of Art has characterized its highest masters. Giorgione in nowise intends you to suppose that the Madonna ever sat thus on a pedestal with a coat of arms upon it; or that St. George[2] and St. Francis ever stood, or do now stand, in that manner beside her, but that a living Venetian may, in such vision, most deeply and rightly so conceive of her and of them."

"Secondly, observe that the ideas which the picture conveys to you are of noble, beautiful, and constant things; not of disease, vice, thrilling action, or fatal accident."[3]

[1] Crowe and Cavalcaselle, *Painters of Northern Italy*, II. 132.

[2] Really San Liberale, a local soldier-saint.

[3] *Stones of Venice*, Travellers' ed., II. 177.

In one of his Oxford lectures, Mr. Ruskin spoke of this picture as one of the two most perfect in the world; alone in the world as an imaginative representation of Christianity, with a monk and a soldier on either side, the soldier bearing the white cross of everlasting peace on the purple ground of former darkness. In Giorgione's time the Lord of Castel-Franco was a bold *condottiere* named Cuzio Costanzo. He had been in the service of Queen Cornara of Cyprus, who had made her home in the neighbouring Asolo. His young and brave son Matteo had been killed at Ravenna in 1504, and buried with his ancestors. It is said that Giorgione was commissioned to paint this altar-piece in memory of the young Matteo, and that the lovely figure of St. Liberale is his likeness. The armour is certainly the same as that represented on a stone effigy of Matteo in the cemetery of Castel-Franco, with a helmet at his feet resembling that worn by the saint. Another tradition says that the two saints are likenesses of Giorgione himself and his brother. In any case, the glorious figure of a knight in glimmering silver armour in our National Gallery is a study for this picture, though the figure is unhelmeted, and the right hand idle. But the genius of the artist has put into the faces an indescribable yearning and beauty. The head of the Virgin, especially, has perhaps never been surpassed for expressive and sorrowful dignity, and the effect produced upon us by the whole picture can scarcely be defined.

The Ansidei Madonna, for which the nation gave £70,000, or £14 for every square inch, belongs to Raphael's second period, 1504–1508, when he studied in Florence, and (not wholly to his advantage) learnt much from the methods and genius of Michael Angelo and Leonardo. The loss of what he unlearnt in that period was greater than his gain. Though he advanced far beyond the tender pietistic mannerism and "semi-woful ecstasy" of Perugino, which he had already not only equalled, but surpassed, he also began to acquire the fatal tendency to

value artistic methods more than the expression of religious feeling. This Madonna, painted in 1506, does not, however, markedly betray the advancing degeneracy of conception. Raphael is still Peruginesque in feeling, if he is becoming less so in manner. As a picture, it is perfect, and in perfect condition. The figures of St. John the Baptist — the type of holiness in contemplative seclusion — and of St. Nicholas of Bari — the type of holiness in active service — are full of dignity. The Virgin is still not only lovely, but queenly, and the Child is not yet simply human.

The National Gallery is rich in noble Madonnas of the School of Ferrara. They are specially interesting from the curiousness and splendour of their accessories. That by Cosimo Tura is a specimen of his marvellous powers as a colourist. It is a sort of fantasy in red and green, which two colours are placed side by side, not only in all the robes, but even in the architecture, which is adorned with the cup and ball ornament. Of the six angels, two have violins, two have guitars, and one is playing a regal, which the other blows with a curious pair of bellows. Interesting as the picture is, it is surpassed by the superb composition which hangs beside it, by Ercole di Guilio Grandi, once an altarpiece at Ferrara. Few pictures are so rich in finished details or finer in general effect. To the left, on a pavement of white and brown marble, stands the youthful figure of St. William. He is in full armour, except that he wears no helmet, and his hair flows in rich masses round his strong grave face. Opposite him is the ascetic Baptist, who holds out a book. His worn and anxious expression is in singular contrast with the peace on the face of the young warrior. The solemn Virgin is robed in dark blue and red, and the glorious Child stands erect upon her knee, lifting His hand to bless. She is seated on a superb throne. In front of the Predella is an ornament intended for an embossed ivory relief of Adam and Eve tempted by the serpent, and on either side is the head of a prophet in grisaille, representing white marble. The visible sides of the octagonal

ANSIDEI MADONNA. *Raphael.*

From the Picture in the National Gallery, London.

bases below are painted alternately in grisaille and in rich colouring with scenes which represent the Massacre of

Enthroned Madonna. (Ercole di Guilio Grandi.)

the Innocents, the Presentation, and Christ among the Doctors. The upper and lower steps are separated by a border of stags and swans, both symbolical. Over the

Virgin is an elaborate arch, of which the roof is adorned with slabs of porphyry, with a gilt boss in the centre of each. The dolphins of the frieze above are emblems of love. The archivolt is enriched with half figures like those of Raphael in the Loggie of the Vatican, and on either side, on gold mosaic, are the Virgin and the Angel Gabriel. This noble and splendidly inventive work must rank high among the treasures of the Gallery.

In the same room is a large and important work by Garofalo, very beautiful in its colouring. The Virgin sits under a baldacchino, with curtains of green. Behind her is a black screen with a gorgeous pattern of gold and crimson. On one side stand the stately figures of St. William and St. Clara; on the other, of St. Francis and St. Anthony.[1]

Another fine Ferrarese, or rather Bolognese, *Enthroned Madonna and Child with Saints* is that by Lorenzo Costa (N. G. 29). It is painted on *rensa* (fine linen), originally attached to wood, but lined with canvas at Antwerp in 1848. It is one of the best pictures of this "Perugino of Ferrara," and Calvi calls it *uno stupore*.[2] It is marked by the Ferrarese device of an opening between the upper and lower part of the throne, though no landscape is visible.

The last *Santa Conversazione* which I need mention is by the great and learned Paduan painter, Andrea Mantegna (1431–1506). Born at Vicenza, and like Giotto, beginning life as a shepherd-boy, he became the pupil and adopted son of Squarcione, and married a sister of Gentile and Giovanni Bellini. Richter called this Madonna "one of the choicest pictures in the National Gallery." In the figures, and above all, in the drapery, we see the statu-

[1] In the Ferrara Gallery is a fine *Madonna and Saints*, by Ercole di Roberto Grandi, with a division between the seat and the pedestal of the Madonna's throne, shewing a landscape behind it. This device was peculiar to the Ferrarese School, and is said to have been introduced by Cosmè Tura. Another, by Savoldo, in the same gallery, is a fine specimen of his mysterious colouring.

[2] See, too, Rio, *Art Chrêtien*, II.

esque tendencies of Andrea's art, and the effect which had been exercised on his imagination by long study of the antique. In all his pictures great attention is paid to modelling, chiaroscuro, and prospective. But the picture is none the less a truly religious picture in its grave and noble sentiment. In the face of the Virgin we see a

Santa Conversazione. (Andrea Mantegna.)

mother's pride and tenderness, tempered by devotion, as she upholds with both hands the Infant Christ, who stands upright on her knee, His right hand uplifted in blessing. "It is," says Mr. Monkhouse, "the earliest representation of the Holy Infant that we possess in which the expression of His Divinity is given in statuesque form."

At her right stands a majestic St. John the Baptist, with his reed cross, and the scroll inscribed with the words, *Ecce Agnus Dei*. On the left-hand side — an illustration of the true repentance, which was preached by the Herald of the Wilderness — stands the Magdalene, holding in her hand a vase of precious ointment, because she was erroneously identified with Mary of Bethany. Soft silver clouds are floating over the sky. The background is formed by a garden of orange trees with dark green leaves and golden fruit. The picture is characterized by its dignity and sincerity.

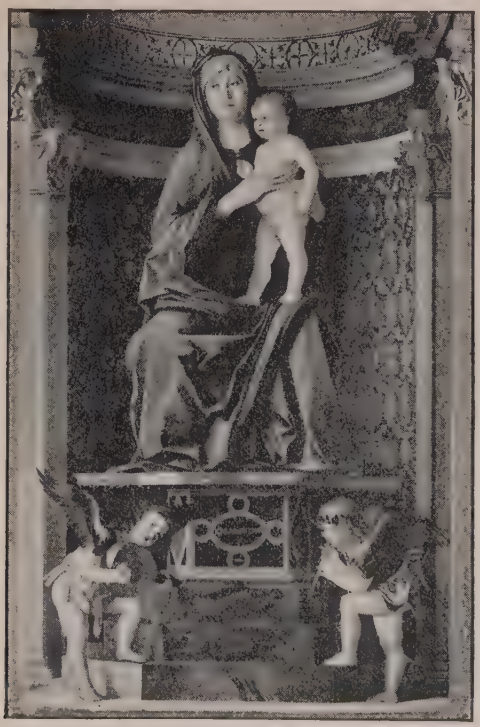
Mantegna's splendid *Madonna della Vittoria* was painted for the Marquis Francesco Gonzaga of Mantua, after his victory over Charles VIII. at Furnovo, in 1495. The Virgin is seated in a green bower. St. Michael and St. Maurice hold the skirts of her mantle. The infant St. John stands beside her. The marquis in full armour kneels below.[1]

The San Zaccaria Madonna of Giovanni Bellini was painted in 1505, and must rank with his Madonna in the Frari among the loveliest pictures in the world. The Virgin is seated on a throne with renaissance ornaments on a pavement of squares of marble. On the summit of the throne is the crowned head of an aged king. On its lowest step a long-haired angel is playing his violin. On either side stand St. Catherine and St. Peter, St. Lucia and St. Jerome. The apostle and the saints are figures of unequalled grandeur, and their "moral beauty" has none of the predetermined sweetness and celestial affectation which mark the saints of Perugino. The Virgin and Child are as noble as those of Bellini invariably are. The Virgin is always serious, and ideal even in costume, the Infant Christ is not only well formed, but as sublime and impressive in action and position as is possible, without destroying the expression of childhood.[2]

[1] A sketch is given in Rosini, III. 196.

[2] Burckhardt thinks that in Venice Giovanni Bellini was the first to

The Frari Madonna is another picture, which, once seen and enjoyed, can never be forgotten. It is one of the truly great pictures of the world. It was a work of Giovanni's glad, peaceful, ever-progressive old age. "The new juxtaposition of saintly figures, without definite emotion, or any distinct devotion, gives the effect of something



Frari Madonna. (Bellini.)

supersensual by the harmonious union of so many free and beautiful characters in a blessed state of existence." In the expression of calm happiness and lofty dignity, Giovanni Bellini is the greatest of all painters. In that rank

remove the saints from the side panels of the *ancona* into the picture itself.

Albrecht Dürer — no mean judge — placed him, even in extreme old age, among the painters of his own day, though they counted amongst them a Giorgione and a Titian.

On the golden vault over the head of the glad Virgin, is inscribed: —

> "Janua certa poli, duc mentem, dirige vitam,
> Quae peragam commissa tuae sint omnia curae."

The head of the Virgin is thrown into relief by the rich golden-woven curtains that hang behind it, and in her eyes is that indescribably far-off look which we only find in the works of the most religious painters. On the steps of the throne sit two child-angels, with radiant faces, and each with one foot on the marble. One wears a wreath of flowers round his sunny curls, and is absorbed in the music of his flute. The face of the other, who plays a mandolin, is more thoughtfully glad.

The special glory of Bergamo are the masterpieces of Lorenzo Lotto in the churches of San Bartolommeo and San Spirito. In the latter, the glorified Virgin and Child appear in a glow of rose and gold over a splendid group of saints. The crowd of enraptured angels round the heavenly vision are bathed in the celestial light, and their very wings are of rose-colour. The picture reminds us of the manner of Correggio, as Lotto's often do, though they shew far greater depths of feeling. No one who has seen this rosy, glowing San Spirito picture, can fail to see the rapturous piety which it expresses, or can ever forget it. "The hovering garland of celestial beings, so ethereal that one feels they may pass like a rainbow from sight, is as charming in form as it is in colour. St. John the Baptist, as a little child romping with a lamb, sits in the foreground at the foot of the throne. This little group is full of grace. The winning smile on the child's face is reflected in the countenance of the lamb, which laughs as merrily as lamb could laugh. The picture is dated, 1521."[1]

[1] A. C. Hare, *North Italy*, I. 226.

This picture represents Lotto at his best. The other gigantic altarpiece, at the church of San Bernardino, is no less splendid. Boy angels extemporize a canopy by holding over the Virgin's head the folds of the green curtain which hangs behind her throne. She is clad in a robe of the richest crimson. An angel sits to write on the flower-strewn step of the throne. Like Cimabue's Madonna, this picture was carried to its destination by rejoicing multitudes.

Some of the best Madonnas of the gifted Moretto are in the great hall of the Palazzo Martinengo.

Among them is an enthroned Madonna, in which, as is so common, the Virgin is seated under a stately arch, dressed in a splendid robe of red and white. In her arms is the Holy Child, and at her right on the folds of the great green mantle which has fallen from her shoulders, stands the Infant Baptist with his cross. They are all three upon cherub-supported clouds, and surrounded by a dazzling nimbus. Underneath the cherub heads there is a space of deep blue sky. The saints beneath are St. Euphemia, with her son, St. Nicolas — evidently from the same fine model as in the picture of the Roncaglia family, St. Catherine and St. Augustine. In this, as in all Moretto's pictures, the characteristics are holiness, repose, dignity, and superb, though always solemn, colouring.

In Moretto's altarpiece at San Clemente we have one of his greatest works. The Virgin and Child sit under arches over which roses twine. On the ledge sit two cherubs, one of whom has his arm round a flowery pilaster; the other is looking through the blossoms. The Child on the Virgin's knee holds an apple in His hand. St. Clement, in full episcopal robes, gives the blessing in the presence of St. Dominic, St. Catherine, a lovely Magdalene, and St. Florian, who holds a banner and palm branch, and is clad in a magnificent suit of blue and silver armour inlaid with gold. There are cherubs on the balcony above.

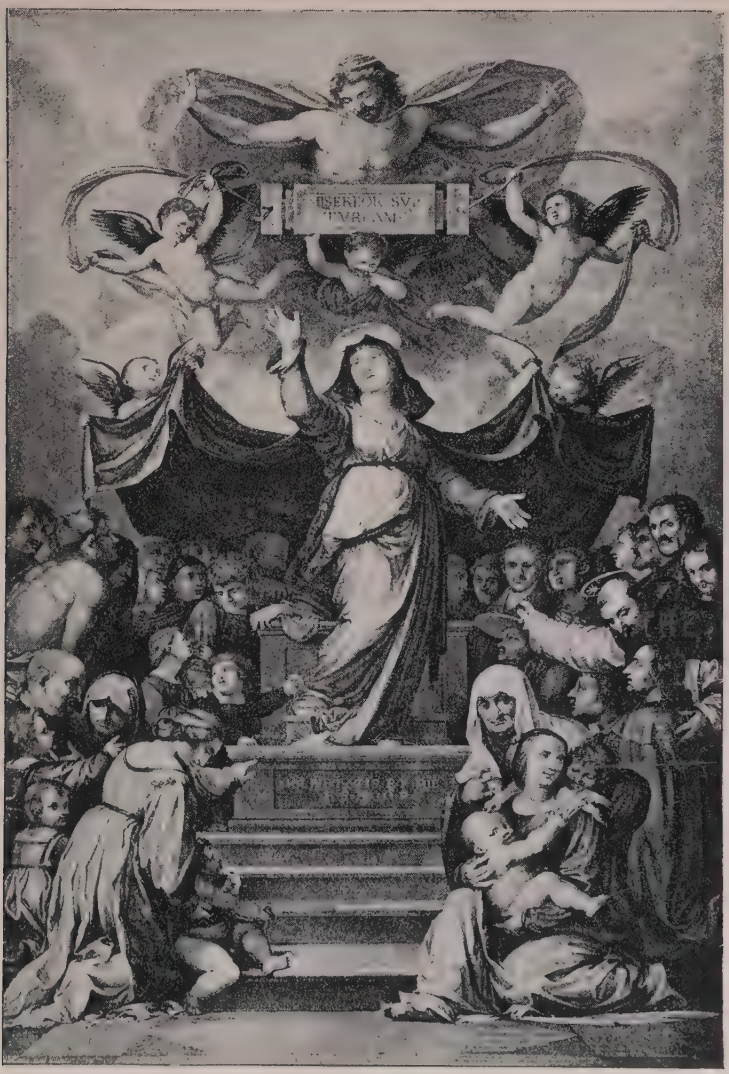
There is in the Brera, a Madonna in glory, with four

saints on earth below, by Savoldo, the noble painter of Brescia. An angel plays music on either side. Sir C. Eastlake regards this picture "as one of the finest and most noteworthy in the Brera."

It is one of the most unfortunate gaps in our National Gallery that we possess no specimen of the work of Fra Bartolommeo. Some of his Madonnas are exquisite. That in the church of San Martino, at Lucca, was painted in 1509. The Virgin is seated on a sort of altar, on the step of which an angel sings. Two others hang in the air to place a crown of gold on the Virgin's head. They are in the air, as in their natural element. Light and shadow pass with delicious interchange over their fresh and rosy limbs; and if the Virgin draws us to God, she also makes us love humanity. The picture reminds us of Carpaccio and Giovanni Bellini. The Frate's *Madonna of the Baldacchino*, in the Louvre, might have been painted by Raphael himself. The majestic air, the subtle folds of the drapery, the brilliant colour "éclatante comme une fanfare, douce comme un cantique," the general harmony and tenderness of the picture shew us the Florentine School at the zenith of its power. In the Madonna of this great and noble master at Panshanger, we see the influence of Leonardo and Raphael, mingled with the religious devotion of Savonarola and San Marco. The Virgin is turning towards the little Baptist, while with a look of deep thoughtfulness the Child Jesus takes the cross of reeds.

Still more striking is the *Madonna della Misericordia* (A.D. 1515) of this great Florentine, who painted nothing impure and nothing ignoble. It is in the Church of San Romano at Lucca,[1] and furnishes the most absolute antithesis possible to the *Last Judgment* of Michael Angelo.

[1] Given by Rosini and by Dohme, III. 13. How much more mundane is the feeling of Andrea del Sarto's *Madonna delle Arpie*, painted in 1517! Here the Virgin is a portrait of his wife, Lucrezia Fede. St. Francis and St. John stand on either side. Why should there be a bas-relief of harpies on the Virgin's throne?



MADONNA DELLA MISERICORDIA. *Fra Bartolommeo.*

From the Picture in the Church of San Romano, Lucca.

It is perhaps his masterpiece, — exquisite in symmetry, in colour, in dignity, in devotional feeling. The enraptured Virgin, with a look of intense piety and earnestness on her upturned face, stands upon an altar, — one hand uplifted to her Divine Son, while her other is outspread to indicate the crowd of suppliants below. Christ bends from the sky above. Leaning down over her, and over the representatives of the human race, He unfolds His left hand, on which the scar is visible, and uplifts the right in benediction, while His face expresses an infinite pity and love. Three sweet child-angels uphold the tablet above Mary's head. Two others spread out protectingly the folds of the mantle with which she covers and overshadows the throng below. They represent youths and maidens, and mothers with their little ones, and aged men and women, and monks and priests, and rich and poor, —worshippers of every age and degree, — a truly noble group. Some of them point upwards at the pleading Mother of Compassion, and the peace of God is upon their beautiful and solemn faces, full of joy and hope and prayer.

The Frate's *Madonna del Trono* (A.D. 1511) in the Uffizi was left unfinished at his death. It is in black and white. The Virgin is lovely, and even Raphael has scarcely surpassed the beautiful boy-angels.

We may refer to one later picture of the Madonna, Domenichino's very famous *Madonna of the Rosary* in the gallery of Bologna.[1]

Domenico Zampieri, commonly called Domenichino, was a pupil first of Denis Calvaert, then of Carracci, and lived for some time in the house of his friend, Albani, at Rome. He died at Naples in 1641, and it was suspected that he had been poisoned by the jealous rivalry of the three infamous painters, Corenzio, Ribera (Spagnoletto), and Carracciolo, known as "the Cabal of Naples." Domenichino

[1] There is said to be no Coronation of the Virgin before the fourteenth century, and the use of the rosary seems to have stimulated the conception. Murillo painted at least six Madonnas of the Rosary.

lived in days when "the Age of Faith" — the age of deep religious feeling and devotion — had lost all its fervour. This splendid *Madonna del Rosario* is the glorification of a dogma and of a monkish invention, more than of Christ. It is painted chiefly to enhance the fame of St. Dominic and the efficacy of the Rosary.[1] The Virgin is seated on the clouds, with a pensive, but somewhat sentimental and feebly prettified look. The Holy Child is in a short blue tunic. His right hand is full of roses, red and white, which He is showering down to earth from a golden vase supported by three lovely child-angels.

There is in the Dresden Gallery a *Madonna with St. Francis*, by Correggio. Correggio painted it for a hundred ducats when he was a mere youth, but it has all his charm of manner.[2] The Madonna's throne is under an open portico. A wreath of ten sweet angel-faces form a sort of living nimbus above her head, and a little below them are two naked *putti* of infinite gracefulness, with folded hands. On her left are St. John the Baptist and St. Catherine, — the former pointing to the Christ; the latter,

[1] On one side a nimbus of angels and cherubs weep over the instruments of the Passion, — the cross, the cup, the scourge, the crown of thorns. On the other, angels and cherubs exult over the emblems of triumph, — crowns, lilies, the Gospel, the Ascension, the *Gloria in Excelsis*. At the feet of the Virgin and Child kneels St. Dominic, looking earthwards; the rosary, of which he was the inventor, is in his hand. He is pointing to the Virgin, as though to shew the acceptable method of her worship. Below is all the tumult and misery of earth, but all the sufferers rely on the rosaries which they hold. Two lovely children play with a rosary. A sick man is outstretched on a mat, his wife embracing him, and both intercede with the rosary. Maidens attacked by furious armed men cling to their rosaries, and the saints at the right also hold them in their hands. That Domenchino delighted in these scenes of violent contrast is shewn by the somewhat horrible martyrdom of St. Agnes, which hangs opposite to the picture which Guido is said strangely to have valued above the work of Raphael. It is also shewn by the almost brutal martyrdom of St. Peter Martyr in the same gallery. He who could paint such scenes might produce glorious pictures, but hardly, in the best sense, sacred ones.

[2] Ruskin, *On the Old Road*, I. 81.

MADONNA OF THE ROSARY. *Domenichino.*

From the Picture in the Gallery of Bologna.

with her face upraised in ecstasy, holding a sword and palm branch, and with a crown at her feet. On her right is the half-kneeling St. Francis, and behind him St. Anthony of Padua, with his lily and his book. The Virgin and the Child both bend in blessing towards St. Francis. Above the pedestal of the splendid throne, two naked children lean on a circular picture of Moses holding in his hand the two tables of stone, and on the lowest step in red outline are sketches of the story of Adam.

Much more ambitious and perfect in execution, yet less pleasing, is the famous *Madonna del San Girolamo* in the Gallery of Parma. It is called from the splendid St. Jerome which stands at one side. The Virgin is "inexpressibly lovely"; not so the Child Christ, though nothing can be more tender than His attitude. With one hand He is beckoning to the *putto*, who has the vase of the Magdalene, and with the other He plays tenderly with her long hair. St. Jerome, both from his connexion with the Vulgate, and from the picturesqueness of his legend, is, with St. Francis, the saint most frequently represented in these ideals of the Holy Catholic Church.

Among other enthroned Madonnas, we may mention, in passing, that by Francia at Bologna. Every work of that fine painter deserves loving study. One enchanting feature of the picture is a little angel on the step of the throne, "upon whose cheek the fair flush opens until we think that it comes and fades, and returns as his voice and his harping are louder or lower, and the silver light rises upon wave after wave of his lifted hair."

EX VOTO PICTURES.

Not a few of the noblest pictures of the Madonna and Child were painted as *ex voto* pictures for special donors. Among these we may make a special mention of five: Holbein's Madonna of the Burgomaster Meyer; Moretto's

Roncaglia Madonna; Giovanni Bellini's Madonna in San Pietro Martire at Murano; Titian's Pesaro Madonna; and Paul Veronese's Cucigna family at Dresden.

Since 1871 it has been generally admitted that the Madonna in the Dresden Gallery is a copy of the original by Holbein in Darmstadt; but it is a copy of unsurpassed merit, and is in some respects more valuable than the original, because it has not been "restored." The Burgomaster Meyer, struck by the spread of Reformation opinions in Basle, wished to shew his adherence to the Romish faith. As his picture could not, at that stormy period, be placed in a church, it probably served as an altarpiece for his family chapel. It was painted in 1526, a little before Holbein's journey to England. The Madonna is here represented as the Protectress of the donor's family, of which the members worship under the shadow of her robe, and under the benediction of the Holy Child. She wears a crown of gold, and her long fair hair streams over her shoulders. Her face is full of a lofty and gentle sadness. On the right kneels the father of the family, earnestly gazing up at the divine vision, and by him his two sons, a handsome youth and a lovely naked child. On the spectator's right kneel Magdalena Ben, the Burgomaster's first wife, who died in 1511, and his second wife, Dorothea Kannegiesen, with her daughter Anna. It is undoubtedly a curious circumstance that the Holy Child is stretching out His left arm to bless and overshadow the kneeling family, and that the little naked child-darling of the family is also looking at his own outstretched left arm. Further, the little human child is full of healthy life and vigour, while the Divine Child looks weak and ill. All sorts of romances have been suggested for the interpretation of these circumstances, one of which is the theory of "duplicate identity." It has been supposed that the child in the Virgin's arms is not the Child Jesus, but the sick child of the Burgomaster, whom she has lifted up and healed of some defect or disease in the arm, while the lower part

MEYER EX VOTO MADONNA. *Holbein.*

From the Picture in the Dresden Gallery.

of the picture represents him restored to health. Another favourite theory is that she has taken the sick child in her arms to heal, and has put down the Child Christ to stand for the moment in the family group.[1] But there does not seem to be the least ground of evidence for this conjecture, and the simplest interpretation of the picture is probably the best. The positions of the children are in all probability as purely pictorial as the rumple on the rich Persian carpet on which the family are kneeling.

The Pesaro Madonna, by Titian, is in the Church of the Frari at Venice. This undeniably splendid work was finished in 1536. The captive Turk is a reference to a recent victory over the Turks. St. Peter sits on the step of the Madonna's throne, and St. Francis and St. Anthony stand beside it. The Holy Child turns His gaze towards the two saints and the Pesari, for whom they are pleading, while the Madonna looks down at the Admiral Pesaro, who is carrying a mighty flag. Above, on the clouds, between the huge pillars, are two Angioletti with the cross. Burckhardt calls this "a work of quite unfathomable beauty, by means of which Titian fixed a true conception of subjects of this kind for all future time, according to

[1] See Ruskin, *On the Old Road*, I. 235. The suggestion was first made by Louis Tieck. M. Blanc says: "Il y a peut-être, dans cet échange quelque chose de fort risqué et de fort téméraire en point du vue du dogme ; mais à coup sûr si l'on ne sort pas de l'art c'est un idée heureuse et touchante, et qui peint en traits naïfs la franchise et la cordialité des Allemands." Sir Frederic Leighton says: "In Holbein we have a man not prone to theorize, not steeped in speculation, a dreamer of no dreams ; without passion, but full of joyous fancies, he looked out with serene eyes upon the world around him ; accepting Nature without preoccupation or afterthought, but with a keen sense of all her subtle beauties, loving her simply and for herself. As a draughtsman, he displayed a flow, a fulness of form, and an almost classic restraint, which are wanting in the work of Dürer, and are, indeed, not found elsewhere in German art. As a colourist, he had a keen sense of the value of tone relations, a sense in which Dürer again was lacking ; not so Teutonic in every way as the Nüremberg master, he formed a link between the Italian and the German races. A less powerful personality than Dürer, he was a far superior painter."

pictorial laws of harmony in colour, grouping, and free aerial perspective."

Yet few, I think, could call this in any sense so winning a picture, or so calculated to inspire a spirit of genuine devotion, as the wonderful Madonna with the Doge Barberigo by Giovanni Bellini in San Pietro Martire of Murano, painted in 1488. "Who that has visited Murano," say Messrs. Crowe and Cavalcaselle, "and entered the Church of San Pietro Martire, does not know that beautiful canvas on which the Prince of Venice kneels in all the pomp of orange and ermine, yet with all the humility of a sinner before the Virgin? Who has not been delighted by the lovely calm of that Virgin, with the boy on her knee imparting the benediction to the sound of viol and guitar? What charm dwells in those two children, or that wonderful row of cherubs' heads that hang on cloudlets about the purple curtains; what attractiveness is in the vegetation of the landscape and its beds of weeds and flowers, in which the crane, the peacock, and the partridge alike elect to congregate! How noble the proportions of the saints, how grand and real the portrait of the Doge! Large contrasts of light and shade are united with bright and blended tone. The atmosphere is playing round these people and helping them to live and move before us, and Nature is ennobled by thought and skill."[1]

A singularly impressive picture is also the Madonna of the Roncaglia family in the Church of Santa Maria dei Miracoli in Brescia. It bears the date 1539. St. Nicholas of Bari is presenting two noble boys — orphans of the Roncaglia family — to the Virgin and Child. St. Nicholas was the protector and patron-saint of school-boys. The saint is clothed in a richly embroidered cope of crimson, of which the lining is woven with green leaves. He is an old bald man with white beard and rugged features, which wear

[1] *History of Painting in Northern Italy*, I. 169. We may just mention Tintoret's *Madonna with the Camerlenghi*. See *Stones of Venice*, III. 306.

an expression of the tenderest solicitude as he gazes upwards to plead for his orphan charge. In his left hand,

Roncaglia Madonna. (Moretto.)

which is gloved and ringed, he holds his pastoral staff. His right hand passes round the shoulder of a splendid

little boy with crisp golden curls, dressed in a green tunic with slashed sleeves, who holds a book under his arm, and carries the three golden balls which are the Bishop's emblem. This boy is looking up towards the Virgin with rapturous confidence. The other boy, his elder brother, is richly dressed in darker green, and his shoes are of green velvet. His fair hair is cut straight across his forehead. He carries the Bishop's mitre and is looking out of the picture towards the spectator, as though he had turned away his face in awe. His expression is most natural, and his mouth is slightly open. Two little acolytes stand behind St. Nicholas in attitudes of deep devotion. The Virgin is seated on the pedestal of a side-altar. She is a woman of the noblest and purest beauty, clad in rich brocade. Her golden hair streams down over a floating veil of gauze. A mantle woven with gold is worn over her red dress. She points to the two boys, but the Holy Child, who holds a pear in His left hand, is looking not at the boys, but at her, and has laid His little right hand tenderly upon her cheek. He is clad in white. In front is a hanging of black velvet fringed with gold. The arched recess behind has a golden vaulting, and from over the arch looks down a cherub's head in grisaille. A pink is growing out of the summit of the side column. This singularly charming picture raises Moretto almost to the greatness of Titian in artistic power, as he always exceeds Titian in sincerity of feeling.

Another votive picture by Moretto at Brescia represents a Madonna enthroned among cherubs in a remarkable sky of white and gold. Below, to the right, stands a fine St. Francis, and to the left the Angel Gabriel presents the aged donor, who is dressed in a superb robe of black velvet and ermine.

Paolo Veronese's picture of the Cucigna family is painted with a sincerity and simplicity of faith and unreserve which would be in these days impossible, but which has an immense charm. Veronese wished the family to be painted

as being presented to the Madonna and Child.[1] A pillar of pavonazzetto divides the two portions of the picture. To the left, as you stand facing it, is the Virgin enthroned with the Child Jesus, a most noble child, with His arms outspread to invite and bless. On one side of the throne a lovely angel is seated. A little more in front is St. Jerome, with his white beard streaming over his breast; and on the other side St. John the Baptist with his lamb. The angel and these saints are all holding out their hands to point to, to plead for, or to invite the whole family. The father himself leans forward from behind the pillar, by the side of which stands a sweet little boy, his grandson, dressed like his little brother, in black and white. Behind the little boy is his mother, a noble Venetian lady in a crimson dress, with whom are kneeling her married daughter with her husband and their boy and girl, — the boy especially wears a look of intense devotion. Behind these are Faith, in a robe of dazzling white, holding in her hand the golden chalice of the grapes of God, and with her Hope in a robe of blue, and Charity in crimson. The three divine virtues are leaning over and helping another group. A man in the prime of life, perhaps a nephew, seems to be too horror-stricken and remorseful to advance any farther than the spot at which he has fallen on his knees. But Charity, like a helpful servant of all work, as Mr. Ruskin says, is holding him with her bare white arms. One thoughtful boy, under the shelter of Hope, is turning towards his father, grasping with one hand the hem of the robe of Charity. Another fine young lad is close behind, his face full of cheerfulness; and still further behind is a nurse-maid with the baby in her arms. The only member of the family entirely unaffected by the solemnity of the scene is

[1] It used to be described as a picture of Veronese's own family. (So Ruskin.) Morelli calls it a picture of the Cocina family, and says that a sketch for it is in the Uffizi collection of drawings at Florence, under the name of Titian. (Photographed by Philippot, No. 415.) The name is spelt *Cuccina* in the official catalogue of the National Gallery, p. 68.

a curly-haired Venetian dog, who, displeased at not being the centre of notice, has fairly turned his back on the Virgin, and is looking in the opposite direction, much to the scandal of a sweet little fair-haired boy, who has turned round to catch hold of the dog, and perhaps to recall him to some sense of his duty and the proprieties of the occasion. Even in such a scene and amid such incidents, the frank, natural mirthfulness of Veronese flashes out with charming simplicity.[1] But it is impossible to express the genial piety and virile faith which speak throughout the whole picture. The separate faces are most beautiful or manly, — fine types of Venetian manhood and womanhood. Young and old are clothed in dresses which are rich and graceful; but the manifold accessories are all subordinated to the central conception, and the picture becomes "a joy for ever," not only as a thing of beauty, but also as the outcome of a spirit genuinely religious, though not untouched with mundane elements. Are we altogether the gainers from the circumstance that, in these days, the painting of a family group so engaged would be wholly impossible, and that there is not more than one painter who either would undertake or could possibly achieve it?

[1] Morelli (*Italian Masters in German Galleries*, trans. Richter, p. 197) calls Veronese "the bright, and though not grand, yet always dignified Paolo, that lovable comedian, somewhat Spanish in his love of show, yet never ignoble."

Book V.

THE BIRTH AT BETHLEHEM.

"Æternum Lumen, Immensum Numen,
Paucorum vinculis stringitur;
In vili caula, exclusus aula,
Rex coeli bestiis cingitur." — Mauburn.

"Die höchste Liebe wie die höchste Kunst ist Andacht." — Herder.

"Religion answered to an ever-living need. The Bible was no longer a mere document wherewith to justify Christian dogmas. It was rather a series of parables and symbols, pointing at all times to the path that led to a finer and nobler life. Christ, the Apostles, the Patriarchs, and Prophets were the embodiment of living principles and of living ideals. Tintoretto felt this so vividly that he could not think of them otherwise than as people of his own kind, living under conditions easily intelligible to himself and to his fellowmen. Indeed, the more intelligible and the more familiar the look, garb, and surroundings of biblical and saintly personages, the more would they drive home the privileges and ideas they incarnated. So Tintoretto did not hesitate to turn every biblical episode into a picture of what the scene would look like had it taken place under his own eyes, not to tinge it with his own mood." — Berenson, *Venetian Painters*, p. 55.

I.

THE ANNUNCIATION.

"Wie jeder Gedanke jede Seele Melodie ist, so soll der Menschengeist durch sein Allumfassen, Harmonie werden Poesie Gottes." — BETTINA.

IN entering on the attempts to delineate actual scenes in the Gospel History, we reach those later phases in the history of religious Art, in which subjects at first handled symbolically, and next conventionally, tend to become more and more pictorial, till they end in being absolutely realistic.

1. The earliest known representation of the Annunciation — if indeed it be one — is in the cemetery of St. Priscilla. It is given by Bosio (I. 541), and simply represents a youthful female seated on a chair, before whom a youth bows in deep reverence.[1]

2. Other early pictures are given by Fleury, from a Syriac Bible, from the cemetery of SS. Nereus and Achilles, from the Bible of the Armenians, and from other ancient sources.[2] It is noticeable that at first the angel is unwinged. He first appears with wings in a diptych now in the Cathedral of Milan. Sometimes the Virgin is represented as drawing water in an amphora from the fountain of Nazareth, in accordance with a passage in the apocryphal Gospel of St. James.[3] The wand in the angel's hand is a symbol of divine authority. The Virgin often carries a

[1] *L'Évangile*, I., Pl. iii.

[2] It is also given in Fleury, I., Pl. vii.; and in Aringhi, II. 297.

[3] See a sketch in Martigny, p. 42.

distaff, as in the accompanying woodcut, from a sarcophagus at Ravenna.

3. The earliest Annunciation in the National Gallery is by Duccio, of whom we should certainly have heard more but for the Florentine partialities of Vasari. The subject is treated with all the direct quietness which marks the work of the earliest artists. Upon a gold background is painted a simple arcade, under which the Virgin is sitting. She has been reading a book of devotion, but looks up towards the angel, who is approaching her with a gesture of salutation. The lines of gold on the robes of the angel and of the Virgin were the old conventional method of symbolizing light, a method which Duccio was the last to use. We here see the work of a painter of real genius, full of devout reverence for the ancient traditions from which he has only just begun to emancipate himself. The treatment is to a great extent traditional, and for a long period among the Giotteschi it only varies in minor details. There is, for instance, in San Marco, an Annunciation which Vasari attributes to Pietro Cavallini (b. 1257). The Virgin sits on a marble floor; behind her is a hanging, woven with stars. Rays of light on which floats a dove are streaming towards her heart, to which she presses her left hand. Her right hand rests on an open book. On the wall are the words *Ecce Ancilla Domini*. In front of her is a vase of flowers in which the buds are three-pointed. In front of her, his arms folded across his breast, kneels the angel.[1] In the earlier pictures, such as those of Guido of Siena and Cimabue, it is the Virgin, not the angel, who bows and trembles.

[1] Rosini, I. 198; Gruyer, II. 46.

4. Angelico's Annunciations mark no special advance, except in their heavenliness. His best is the one in the convent of San Marco. The beautiful Gabriel bends before the Virgin, with his arms crossed on his breast, and

Annunciation. (Angelico.)

the painter may have had in his mind the lovely passage of Dante, which is in itself a picture of the Annunciation in clear and glowing verse: —

"The Angel who to earth the news made known
Of peace that men had wept for many a year,

And heaven long barred and closed had open thrown,
Before us stood in sculptured form so clear,
In attitude that sweetest thought betrayed,
That he no speechless image did appear.
One could have sworn that he his *Ave* said,
For there too, in clear-imaged form, was she
Who turned the key that high love open laid,
And on her mien is written, one might see
Ecce Ancilla Dei full as plain
As figures that on wax imprinted be."[1]

The angel is perhaps less majestic than is usual with this painter, but the Virgin is only the more to be worshipped, because here, for once, she is set before us in the verity of life. "No gorgeous robe is upon her, no lifted throne set for her; the golden border gleams faintly on the dark blue dress; the seat is drawn into the shadow of a lowly loggia. The face is of no strange far-sought loveliness; the features might even be thought hard, for they are worn with watching, and severe, though innocent. She stoops forward with her arms folded on her bosom; no casting down of eye, nor shrinking of the frame in fear; she is too earnest, too self-forgetful for either; wonder and inquiry are there, but chastened and free from doubt; meekness, yet mingled with a patient majesty; peace, yet sorrowfully sealed, as if the promise of the angel were already underwritten by the prophecy of Simeon. They who pass and repass in the twilight of that solemn corridor, need not the adjuration inscribed beneath, —

'Virginis intactae cum veneris ante figuram
Praetereundo cave ne sileatur Ave.'"

There is another Annunciation by Fra Angelico on the upper floor of San Marco, of which Taine remarks: "Such immaculate modesty, such virginal candour! By her side Raphael's Virgins are merely vigorous peasant girls."

5. An Annunciation of Lorenzo Veneto, painted in 1358, differs from its predecessors in representing the

[1] *Purgatario*, X. 35–46.

Virgin as crowned, and clad in richly embroidered robes. The dove is descending over her decorated aureole. The angel who uplifts his hand in benediction is much smaller in size.[1]

6. The next Annunciation which we will notice is that by Fra Filippo Lippi (d. 1469). It shews the immense advance which Art had made in the course of a century. The religious feeling is still predominant, but it is not exclusive. Lippi has time to think, and to make the spectator think, of other things outside the central fact which he illustrates. The general arrangement is traditional, but it has begun to admit many beautiful and some entirely mundane accessories. Among these, the most prominent is on the stand of the vase in which is growing the splendid lily in full bloom, on the Virgin's left. The device is a ring in which are tied three feathers. This was the badge of Cosimo de' Medici, the patron of the gifted monk. No doubt Brother Lippi owed much to the great Medici; but Margaritone or Duccio would have shrunk with something like horror from this intrusion of pride and modernism. The Virgin is no longer reading, but has cast down her eyes after her first upward glance. The lovely folds of her robe and mantle fall round her with perfect symmetry, and float over the marble floor of her dainty chamber. Through an opening on her right come the fingers of a hand, which sends rays of light towards her. The Holy Dove, enclosed in a nimbus, is winging its way to her heart. In the garden in front of her, among the grass and flowers, kneels the angelic messenger with a gesture of reverence. In one hand is a branch of lilies; with the other he holds together the folds of his mantle. The wings which are outspread from his shoulders, though wholly impossible for purposes of flight, are truly splendid for purposes of ornament, being full of eyes like those of Ezekiel's Cherubim. They are meant for peacocks' eyes, as the recognized symbol of incorruptibility. The picture

[1] See Rosini, II. 86.

abounds in lovely details, and there is something singularly fascinating in the pure, sweet faces both of Gabriel and of the Virgin.

Fra Filippo Lippi.

7. The scene is depicted with ever-increasing splendour as years pass on. Churches like the Santissima Annunziata in Florence bear witness to its fascination for pious Christians. As is so often the case in Art, the central fact is gradually lost sight of amid the magnificent accessories. The humble cottage at Nazareth becomes a superb palace, or a gorgeous oratory, and the village maiden is clothed in gold and gems. The intensity of the religious idea displaces the deeper meaning of the lowly reality.

This is further indicated by the early intrusion of other figures into the Galilean home. Even Angelico places behind his Gabriel a Peter Martyr; and in the church of the Minerva at Rome, Filippino Lippi makes St. Thomas Aquinas a witness of the scene, and introduces the donor of the picture, whom, forgetful of the angel's presence, the Virgin blesses.

8. Carlo Crivelli was born about 1430, more than twenty years after Lippi. Like Mantegna, he adhered to tempera, and did not adopt the oil-painting which the Van Eycks had introduced into Italy. The fact that his works have lost none of their brilliancy, proves that tempera-painting had its advantages. Crivelli is a very fascinating painter. Some of his best works are at Ascoli, where he

spent all the latter years of his life. "He is connected," says Sir F. Burton, "with the Schools of Padua and Murano, but his own strong individuality gives him a unique position in Italian Art. . . . In his works may be found, expressed in quaint combination, morose asceticism; passionate and demonstrative grief, verging on caricature; true and touching pathos; occasional grandeur of conception and presentment; knightly dignity; feminine sweetness and tenderness, mingled with demure and far-fetched grace; infantile gravity and playfulness."[1] He enriched his paintings with gold and silver ornaments, and even with imitation jewels in high relief. Varied marbles, oriental carpets, fruit and flowers, in canopies and festoons, or scattered singly about, enhance the richness and pomp of the whole effect.

Crivelli's Annunciation in our Gallery (No. 739) is a noble and interesting specimen of the artist's work. Lippi's Annunciation, though it lacks some of the simple and concentrated sincerity of Duccio's, is still an Annunciation, in spite of its minor details; but Crivelli's almost ceases to be an Annunciation at all, in the gorgeous elaborateness of all its surroundings and incidents. It is true that you see the Virgin kneeling at her *prie-dieu* in her neat chamber, with a book before her. Conscious of a divine message, she has clasped her hands across her breast. If you look up to the sky, you can just make out two wreaths of cherubs' faces, — such they appear to be, — from which one ray of light, streaming down through an architectural opening in the cornice, falls on the Virgin's head, passing through the radiating nimbus of the dove who hovers over her. The house of which her chamber forms a part is a

[1] The remarks of Messrs. Crowe and Cavalcaselle on Crivelli are quite just. "On the whole, a striking, original genius, unpleasant, and now and then grotesque, but never without strength, and always in earnest. He will carry out daintiness with great consistency in the air of a head, the expression of a face, the motion of a hand, and the fine texture of a cloth." See *History of Painting in Northern Italy*, I. 82–95.

lustrous Italian palace, enriched with elaborate lintels and capitals, and with a cornice composed of fruit, flowers, masks, and vases. Above this cornice, on the edge of which sits a superb peacock, is an open loggia. A richly woven piece of tapestry hangs over its balustrade, on which is a basket of flowers and a shrub in an earthenware pot. A bird-cage hangs above, and a bird is seated on a pole. The window of the Virgin's chamber has an iron grille, behind which is another plant in a vase. The scene outside is a street. Under the arch at the end of it are seen various figures in the noble and flowing costume of the fifteenth century. Opposite are some stone steps, on the top of which three grave persons are conversing, and a sweet little girl, with her back to them, is peeping round the parapet. In the street kneels Gabriel opposite to the Virgin, but with the wall of the house between them, as though the painter meant to indicate that he was only present to the spiritual vision. He is an extremly æsthetic and delicate angel. In his left hand, in a most affected attitude, he holds a lily with his femininely thin fingers, while he uplifts the forefinger of his equally feminine right hand. His carefully arranged tresses are bound with a ribband, in front of which, beneath his nimbus, is a jewel and a small feather. A bird's wing, with large pen-feathers, is outspread behind him. Beside him, quite distracting the attention of the spectator, and one would suppose of the dainty angel also, kneels St. Emidius, the patron saint of Ascoli, with his fresh and almost boyish face. He wears his mitre and his gold-embroidered cope, which is clasped with a large and splendid brooch. He uplifts his right hand in admiration, as he gazes somewhat intrusively into the angel's face, calling his attention to the model of his city, which he holds in his left hand.[1]

[1] "Carlo Crivelli takes rank with the most genuine artists of all times and countries, and does not weary even when 'great masters' grow tedious. He expresses with the freedom and spirit of Japanese design a piety as wild and tender as Jacopo da Todi, a sweetness and emotion as

THE ANNUNCIATION. *Carlo Crivelli.*

From the Picture in the National Gallery, London.

9. Almost every painter of note tried his hand on this entrancing subject. Paolo Uccello, Piero dei' Franceschi, Perugino, Vittore Pisano, Cosimo Roselli, Botticelli, Mantegna, Signorelli, Francia, Raphael, and many more. Murillo painted it at least nine times. In the Louvre picture Fra Bartolommeo turns the subject into a gathering of saints. Lorenzo di Credi returns to the purer and more simply religious conception. Albertinelli, Jacopo Palma, and Andrea del Sarto aim only at making beautiful pictures, as do Correggio, Titian, and Pordenone. Bonifazio surpasses them all by audaciously placing the scene in the Piazza of St. Mark, so that, as Gruyer says, we are far indeed from Nazareth, —

"Là dove Gabriello aperse l'ali."

10. In the design of Michael Angelo, the angel becomes all but menacing, and the head of the Virgin is wrapped up in linen as though she were a Sibyl, while her gesture is almost one of repudiation. The figure has all the sculpturesque violence of the painter. "Rien de virginal, rien de jeune dans cette femme aux formes exagerées. Entre ces deux formes je cherche le grand mystère de l'amour divin; je ne trouve que l'effroi."[1]

11. The Annunciations of the Venetian School — notably those of TINTORET and PAOLO VERONESE — are noticeable for the rushing impetuosity of the angel in his gleaming flight. In the very characteristic Veronese of the Accademia, he comes with swift flight, which has made his crimson robes stream out far behind him, and the Virgin may well shrink back amazed and half terrified at so lightning-winged a messenger who sweeps into her

sincere and dainty as of a Virgin and Child carved in wax by a French craftsman of the fourteenth century. The mystic beauty of Simone Martini, the agonized compassion of the young Bellini, are embodied by Crivelli in forms and hues which have the strength of line and the metallic lustre of old Satsuma." — Berenson, *Venetian Painters*, p. vi.

[1] Gruyer, II. 50.

presence, bearing the lily branch before him. As usual, Veronese is grandiose and dramatic. He pleases himself with splendid architecture, elaborate balance, large perspectives, and fascinating details. A crystal vase, with a flower in it, over the Virgin's head, is painted as only he could paint at his best.

12. Tintoret, as we should expect, in the Scuola di San Rocco, shews far deeper thoughtfulness.[1] His angel, robed in white, points to the haloed dove, and is followed by groups of descending cherubs. The scene is a carpenter's workshop, and the line of light on the edge of the carpenter's square leads the eye to the white corner-stone of a ruined house, which is typical of the Jewish Dispensation. "Not in meek reception of the adoring messenger, but startled by the rush of his horizontal and rattling wings, the Virgin sits, not in the quiet loggia, nor in the green pasture of the restored soul, but houseless, under the shelter of a palace vestibule, ruined and abandoned, with the noise of the axe and the hammers in her ears, and the tumult of a city round about her desolation."[2]

13. It will be seen that long before the days of the great Venetian painters, Art had entirely shaken herself free from the old conventions, and had also learnt to yield to other impulses and to aim at other ends than the simple illustration of a sacred event. Such freedom was not, however, won at a single bound. Originality at first could only find scope in the accessories of the picture. Timoteo

[1] In the older Annunciations the Virgin is always humble, and serene, and without a shadow of fear. "It was reserved for the painters of the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries to change angelic majesty into reckless impetuosity, and maiden meditation into panic dread."

[2] "The authority of Tintoret over movement is too unlimited; the descent of his angels is the swoop of a whirlwind or the fall of a thunderbolt; his mortal movements are oftener impetuous than pathetic, and majestic more than melodious." — *On the Old Road*, Part I. 25. See Ruskin, *Modern Painters*, II. 165; Giotto, p. 72. "What is it but light and colour and the star procession of cherubs that imbue the realism of Tintoret's Annunciation with music that thrills us through and through?" — Berenson, p. 54.

Viti (in 1503) found this to his cost. In the Brera there is a lovely Annunciation by this rare master, in which, entirely deviating from the old rules, he represents the angel in the sky pointing to the Infant Christ,[1] whose head is surrounded by a cross, and who is Himself descending from the clouds, with one foot resting on the nimbus round the head of the Holy Dove.[2] The innovation was viewed with extreme disfavour by the watchful jealousy of the Church. "Doubts were raised," says Mr. Dennistoun, "as to the orthodoxy of thus representing the Trinity, and an unfortunate ruddy tint, suffused over the plumage of the snowy dove, was construed into a stain on the Immaculate Conception. The altarpiece was removed to undergo, along with its author, a searching investigation, which resulted in its restoration as an object of devotion, and in his escape from the rigour of the holy office.[3]

14. Albrecht Dürer, whose originality so often breaks out amid the traditional treatment which he could not wholly escape, "introduces a most unwonted element. The Devil, in the form of a hog, contemplates from outside, the scene that takes place in the Virgin's apartment."[4]

15. Let us now pass over four centuries and describe another Annunciation in the National Gallery (No. 1210). It is by Dante Rossetti, one of the few modern painters who have mainly devoted themselves to religious subjects. It is called *Ecce Ancilla Domini*, and is in its whole treat-

[1] This part of the *motif* he probably borrowed from Francia. Rosini, IV. 3.

[2] This method of representing the Annunciation was perhaps borrowed by Viti from his friend Giovanni Sanzio, the father of Raphael. His Annunciation also is in the Brera. Above the head of the kneeling angel, "on a golden-coloured disk bordered with prismatic colours," is seen the Father with a globe in His hand. The little figure of the Infant Christ, bearing a cross, is running down from heaven towards the Virgin. "The distant landscape, with its luminous sky crossed by conventional clouds, is strongly suggestive of Raphael's earlier manner."

[3] Dennistoun, *Dukes of Urbino*, London, 1851.

[4] The plate is No. 7 in Dürer's *Life of the Virgin*. See Mrs. Heaton's *Albrecht Dürer*, p. 123.

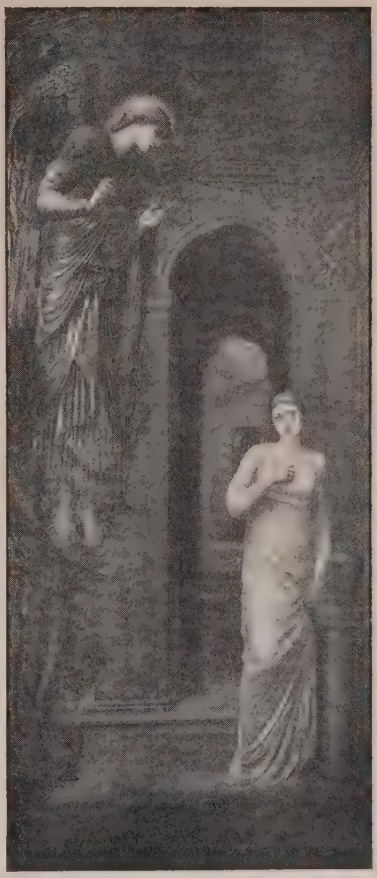
ment absolutely original. When we consider that it was painted when Rossetti was only twenty-one, it gives astonishing proofs of genius. The Angel Gabriel is a splendid youth, with no wings, but with a nimbus round his golden hair. His features are full of grave and manly nobleness. He is clad in a robe of pure white, from the severe and simple folds of which the arm is lifted which holds the lily. His feet are upborne by light primrose-coloured flames. The Virgin, with red hair, and a face full of pained and awe-struck resignation, has just started from sleep on her pallet bed. She has been wakened by the bright vision, and is casting in her mind "what manner of salutation this should be." A simple blue curtain hangs behind her in the plain room, and over it a lamp of the most ordinary kind, such as the poor would use. Through the open window a tree is visible and the blue sky, and the white dove, with a thin golden nimbus round its head, comes floating in. A lovely touch of colour is given by the strip of crimson embroidery beside the pallet, on which the Virgin has been embroidering a white lily. No one can look at the picture without recognizing the deep religious feeling by which it is pervaded.

> "She woke in her white bed and had no fear
> At all; yet wept till sunshine, and felt awed
> Because the fulness of the time was come."[1]

16. Another remarkably lovely and original Annunciation of our own day is by Mr. E. Burne Jones. It was exhibited in the Grosvenor Gallery in 1879. It is reproduced in the *Art Journal* for February, 1893, and I borrow the description of it by Miss Julia Cartwright. "The Virgin receives the angelic salutation standing in the

[1] See Ruskin, *On the Old Road*, I. 312. F. Shields (*Cent. Guild Hobby Horse*, I. 150) mentions another of Rossetti's water-colour sketches, in which the Virgin is washing her hands in a clear stream studded with water-lilies. "The angel appears amid tall white lilies on the bank, and his golden wings form the figure of a cross as they enfold his body."

white porch of her home at Nazareth. On the archway behind her the drama of the 'Fall and Exile from Paradise' are pictured in stone. On the left, a bay tree spreads its dark green leaves over the white wall, and high among the branches, his wings serenely folded, his pointed feet together, stands the angel who brings peace and goodwill to man. Swiftly and suddenly he has come down straight from the presence of God, and now he stands there, not a plume or curl stirred by his rapid flight through space, gazing with reverent delight at the Holy Virgin. The look on her face is hard to describe. It is not fear, it is hardly trouble, it is rather the awe of one who has suddenly become conscious of a heavenly message, and who ponders in her mind the meaning of the words that from henceforth all generations shall call her blessed. The whole spirit of the composition, the severe beauty of line and form, the simple folds of Mary's clinging dress, recall the best days of early Italian Art."



The Annunciation. (Sir E. Burne Jones.)
By permission of the artist.

II.

THE NATIVITY.

"Puer natus in Bethlehem,
Unde gaudet Jerusalem.
Hic jacet in praesepio
Qui regnat sine termino.
Cognovit bos et asinus
Quod puer erat Dominus."

— Pistor, *De Nativ. Dom.*

"We sate among the stalls at Bethlehem;
The dumb kine from their fodder turning there,
Softened their horned faces
To almost human gazes
Toward the newly-born.
The simple shepherds from the starlit brooks
Brought visionary looks,
As yet in their astonied hearing, rung
The strange sweet angel-tongue;
The Magi of the East in sandals worn
Knelt reverent, sweeping round,
With long pale beards, their gifts upon the ground,
The incense, myrrh and gold
These baby hands are impotent to hold;
So let all earthlies and celestials wait
Upon thy royal state:
Sleep, O my kingly one!"

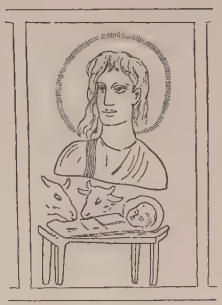
A GROUP OF NATIVITIES AND ADORATION OF THE SHEPHERDS.

"Wild, wild, wild and wild,
Howls the wind and swirls the snow,
Where to-night o'er little Child
Bends a maiden low.
Queis, Puero et Virgini
Exultant omnes Angeli.

"Gold, gold, gold and gold,
Gleam a hundred angels' wings,
Where Mary wraps Him fold on fold
In swaddling bands and sings:
Queis Puero et Virgini
Exultant omnes Angeli."

—Selwyn Image.

If any subject be specially calculated to inspire a painter's powers, it is the Nativity.[1]



The appended wood-cut, from a picture in the Catacombs, gives perhaps the most ancient representation of the Nativity.

The central conception of the Gospels had often found expression in Christian song, and although the *Stabat Mater Dolorosa* of Jacopone is now better known than the *Stabat Mater Speciosa*, the latter was as popular in the Middle

[1] There is an excellent article in the *Art Magazine* for December, 1889, on "The Nativity as depicted in the National Gallery," by J. E. Hodgson, R.A. He points out that the year 1500 may be selected as a line of demarcation in Art. "Early Christian Art, under the tutelage of the Church, insisted mainly on the facts of the Incarnation, the expiatory sacrifice of our Lord, and the mediatorial power of the blessed Virgin. She is everywhere: stooping in adoration over her infant Son, or fainting in agony, or enthroned in glory. More often her pictures are of a strictly mystical, not historical, character; she is the Mediatrix. Here she is perfectly calm, at least in the earlier pictures; there is no show of human affections. What the best men tried to depict was an unselfish pride, a consciousness . . . which brought no glory to herself, but only a sense of unutterable gratitude and humility." In early pictures she shews signs of the pains of childbirth. This was afterwards regarded as unorthodox. Mr. Hodgson proceeds to speak of (1) Orcagna's Nativity (N. G. 573), which is intended only to be a Scripture story, made visible to those who could not read. With Giotto began a more marked naturalism. (2) The Nativity of Piero della Francesca (N. G. 908) shews a symbolism mixed up with other aims, — *e.g.* the sense of beauty, — and to a certain extent weakened by them. (3) Sandro Botticelli, born thirty years later (1455), shews a still further change. His Nativity (N. G. 1304) is a magnificent and imaginative picture, which strikes the imagination by its pageantry, and the senses by its gorgeous colouring. In

Ages. All the early religious painters endeavoured to express in colours what the poet had painted in words:—

"Stabat Mater speciosa
Juxta faenum gaudiosa
Dum jacebat parvulus,
Cujus animam gaudentem,
Laetabundam et ferventem,
Pertransivit jubilus."

The general treatment varied but little. We find always the joyous Mother; the grave, silent, aged St. Joseph; the shepherds, the hymning angels. The ox and the ass are almost always introduced, in accordance with the Septuagint rendering of the well-known verse of Habakkuk (III. 2), *ἐν μέσῳ δύο ζῴων γνωσθήσῃ*. (Vetus Itala; *in medio duorum animalium innotesceris*, "in the midst of two animals shalt thou be recognized.")[1]

1. It is therefore needless to speak of "The Nativities" of the trecentisti, as the fourteenth century painters are called in Italy. They repeat the fundamental theme in the same manner as Giotto had done in the Arena Chapel at Padua, and in Santa Croce at Florence. The Nativity by Orcagna illustrates at once the immaturity of the art in his day, and the conventionality of treatment.[2]

2. A freer treatment was gradually developed. Masolino da Panicale paints the rock in which the shepherds were traditionally said to have taken refuge from a storm, and this rock often reappears. Paula and Eustochium, the lady companions of St. Jerome's pilgrimage, writing from Bethlehem to Marcella at Rome, had said, "It is in the fissure of a rock that the Architect of the Firmament

Rembrandt's Nativity (b. 1606) all traces of symbolism have vanished, and there is no religious feeling or exegetical quality whatever. It is a mere study of light and shade. "*Heu! pietas, heu prisca fides!*"

[1] In our Authorized and Revised Versions the verse is, "in the midst of the years make known." There was also a reference to Is. i. 3.

[2] National Gallery, n°, 573.

was born." But, as in Burne Jones's Nativity, some of the rocky ground has burst into flowers to receive the Lord of Life. The little St. John is present with his cross of reeds. The Virgin is on her knees with hands joined in prayer before her Son. In the heavens are seen the unfolded hands of the Father, and the Holy Dove is descending, accompanied by two angels.[1]

3. Angelico treated the subject at San Marco with his usual simplicity and heavenly sweetness. There is a charming little Nativity by Baldinovetti, the master of Ghirlandajo, in which St. Joseph sits (as often), with a look of deep and saddened thoughtfulness, embracing his knee, and two youthful shepherds approach in attitudes of astonishment and reverence.

4. The treatment of the subject by Piero della Francesca,[2] in the National Gallery, is full of originality and charm. The picture, indeed, is quite unfinished, and is full of the defects of an art as yet imperfect. Upon a cushion among the flowers lies the naked new-born Child lifting His two little hands. At His feet, kneels in prayer, the sweet and simple Virgin. Upon a pack-saddle sits St. Joseph, nursing his leg; and the sole of his foot is turned towards the spectator. Behind him stand two shepherds, one of whom is pointing upwards. Farther away is a rude penthouse, on the grass-grown roof of which sits a magpie.[3] To the right is a town, to the left a valley with rocks and trees. Birds are scattered here and there in the landscape. Between the penthouse and the Child stands a group of five angels with musical instruments. Being angels, they cast no shadow, but they open their mouths like singers and touch their lutes with skilled fingers.

[1] In the Academy at Florence.

[2] This is the name which Vasari gave him, and says that he was so called after his mother. Pacioli calls him, more correctly, Pietro dei' Franceschi.

[3] This ruined penthouse was often intended by the mediæval painters to symbolize the ruins of the Old Dispensation.

Between the angels and the Virgin looks the solemn ox, while over the shoulder of one of them the ass is lifting its head and unmistakably emitting an astonished

The Nativity. (Piero dei Franceschi.)

bray.[1] "In colour," says Mr. Monkhouse, "it is thoroughly original in its tender modulation of soft blues, with browns and grays. There is no aerial perspective, but the picture is a collection of careful studies. Even the pearls on the robes of the angels and in the head-dress of the Virgin are carefully wrought out. The posture is fresh and delightful, and none the less religious, because the painter

[1] I notice the same curious incongruity in a Nativity by Moretto at Brescia.

THE NATIVITY. *Sandro Botticelli.*

From the Picture in the National Gallery, London.

has chosen to clothe his feeling in the forms of his experience."[1]

5. There is no deeper and more interesting picture in our Gallery than the little Nativity of Sandro Botticelli, and it is disheartening to see the cold and careless glance which is all that it attracts from most visitors. They may be repelled by its lack of modern *technique*, but it is a picture of supreme loveliness, and full of divine meaning. I have always regarded it as one of the sweetest and most far-reaching sermons ever preached on the inmost meaning of Christmas Day. It indicates the effects wrought by the birth of Jesus in heaven, and on earth, and under the earth; and it sets forth, above all, the doctrine of Savonarola, that the Incarnation meant, "God and sinners reconciled," and "man made a little lower than the angels, crowned with glory and honour."

In the upper part of the picture is a sky, of which the exquisite colours melt by dewy gradations from the golden glory of the celestial heavens to the blue of our lower horizon. In this sky is a wreath of twelve angels, joined hand in hand in enraptured dances. They are clad like the angels of Fra Angelico, in robes of the most tender vernal colourings, and their attitudes are full of grace and charm. Their wings, like their robes, are alternately of red, green, and white. Each of them holds a branch of olive and myrtle, and a banderole, with the inscription, *Gloria in Excelsis Deo*, from which hangs a light golden crown. The faces of some of them are turned heavenwards, and reflect the radiance of the beatific vision, while others glance downwards with looks of sympathy to earth, as though they were thinking of the *Et in terris pax hominibus bonae voluntatis.*

Directly underneath them is a dark grove of pines, Dante's symbol of the tangled forest of human life. But, in the midst of the dark wood, on a mass of white rock — symbol of the purity and impregnable strength of the

[1] *The Italian Pre-Raphaelites*, p. 40.

Gospel — rises the stable of Bethlehem. On its penthouse roof, three angels in the crimson robes of Love, the white of Innocence, the green of Hope, chant their new carols. On the ground lies the Holy Babe in all the joyous life of infancy, with finger pointing to His mouth as though to say, "I am the Word of God."[1] At His feet kneels Mary, worshipping in something of sad bewilderment, and at His head, leaning against a pack-saddle, Joseph

Antonio Rossellino.

bends in deep humility, his face shrouded by his mantle. Behind him are the ox, the ass, and the manger. Thus was indicated the truth that even for the lower animals the Heavenly Father cares.

On either side of the manger are the three Magi and the three shepherds, representing mankind, both Jews and Gentiles, at each age and of every rank, who are being

[1] Compare the accompanying wood-cuts.

brought into the presence of Christ by ardent angels, who crown their brows with olive, the symbol of fruitfulness, peace, and gladness. In the lower part of the picture three pairs of figures enfold each other in a holy and passionate embrace. Three bright angels, with "good will

Andrea della Robbia.

to men" on the scrolls which they carry, are embracing a youth, an old man, and a man in the prime of life, to represent "heaven and earth rushing together, by the birth of a Redeemer reconciled, reunited after bitter severance. God

has towards each an equal yearning in separation. It is assuredly no fancy to discern, in the assertion of a profound and burning brotherhood between heaven and earth, the keynote of this painting — this lyric of redemption, for such it is."[1] At the bottom of the picture, devils, small, and ugly, and contemptible, strive to hide themselves "in the clefts of the rocks and the holes of the ragged rocks," and thus the picture expresses the effects of the Advent on the good and the evil. The inscription, in bad Greek at the top, shews the tension of feeling under which this picture was painted at the end of A.D. 1500, "in the troubles of Italy, in the half-time after the time during the fulfilment of John xi., in the Second Woe of the Apocalypse, in the loosing of the devil for three years and a half. Afterwards he shall be chained, and we shall see him trodden down, as in this picture." "Botticelli's pictures generally shew a deep vein of sadness, even amid their exultation. He is busy with death and sad in spite of himself."

Can any one who has learned to understand this picture look without delight upon its subtle colouring and lovely forms? And when we grasp its mystic symbolism, can we be wholly untouched by the hope and holiness which it breathes into the soul?

6. The Nativity was naturally a favourite subject of the gentle and holy LORENZO DI CREDI (b. 1456). His masterpiece is in the Academy of Arts at Florence. The Child — His hand pointing to His mouth with the gesture which was traditional in this school — lies among lovely flowers, not on a cushion, but on a cloth thrown over a sheaf of wheat, with allusion to the words, "I am the Bread of Life." At the left kneels a shepherd in adoration; behind Him stands another, in an attitude of devotion and astonishment. The third, a beautiful youth with a face full of thought, carries a lamb. At the right is the sad and modest Virgin in prayer. A young angel kneels

[1] Professor Sidney Colvin, *Portfolio*, III. 25.

on either side of her, and two others whisper tenderly together behind her, while one points heavenward with his finger, as though to say, "This Babe is the Son of God." St. Joseph, leaning on his staff, looks gravely down at the scene. The picture shews a want of originality in its reminiscences of the manner of Fra Filippo, Leonardo, Perugino, Ghirlandajo, and Luini, but it shews all the harmony of composition, the variety of expression, the conscientious care and sincere feeling which characterize the painter.[1] Lorenzo had never felt the whirlwind gust of violence which Michael Angelo let loose over the repose of devotional pictures. All is calm and holy silence. "The great works which God does in the hearts of His creatures," says Bossuet, "naturally produce silence, rapture, and something indescribably divine, which suppresses all expression."

7. Ambrogio Borgognone, born about the same time as Credi, worked much at Padua and Milan. There is a fine Nativity by him, fervent and spiritual, in the Church of San Celso at Milan, in which the Virgin kneels behind the Child, who blesses the donor of the picture. St. John and St. Roch, grave and noble figures, stand on each side of the Virgin. Two little angels in white kneel on the earth, and three others in heaven. There is another of his works at Dresden, in which the Virgin — clothed in a long white robe, on which is broidered in gold the word *Pax* under a crown — wears an expression of the deepest sadness, though the Father is appearing in glory above in a cloud of angels, on whose banderole are the words, *Gloria in Excelsis*. Borgognone was a man of "refined nature and intense spiritual feeling. The presentment of divine or holy personages in calm serenity, or in resigned suffering, accorded best with his temperament. Even his colouring partakes of the prevailing sentiment; the gray

[1] It is outlined in Crowe and Cavalcaselle, III. 470, and Rosini, IV. 201. Vasari says: "Nessuno fu, che nella pulitezza e nel finir l' opere con diligenzia l' imitasse (Leonardo) più di lui."

pallor of his heads is only modified now and then by the reddened eyelids of sorrow. Nothing can be more touchingly beautiful than the type and character of some of his more beautiful faces."[1]

8. Very different, as might have been expected, is the Nativity of Luca Signorelli.[2] It is an ambitious, and in spite of its brown hue, a splendid picture, which endeavours to tell at once the whole story of St. Luke. The naked Babe lies on a cushion. The kneeling Virgin is clad in robes of blue and green — the colours of heaven and of hope. On the right, with clasped hands, sits St. Joseph in orange and crimson. Behind them are three radiant angels with their wings "of many a coloured plume, sprinkled with gold." On the left are two kneeling shepherds, with others standing behind them, and they are "sore afraid" of the vision of the Heavenly Host. One of the shepherds has taken refuge in a cave, where he sits playing on a pipe, and crowned with ivy like a young Greek god — an evident reminiscence of the antique. The faces can hardly be called either devotional or tender, but there is the finest human beauty in the brown shepherd in the straw hat and his young companion. On either side of the Virgin are fair-haired angels, one of whom peers rather affectedly round the Virgin's shoulder.

9. Francia's Nativity in the Gallery of Bologna is a fine picture.[3] It was painted for the Church of the

[1] Sir F. V. Burton.

[2] National Gallery, No. 1133.

[3] Messrs. Crowe and Cavalcaselle hardly do justice to Francia. They say: "It is a delicate and somewhat feminine style, the devotional feeling of which is much on the surface, and wants life and glow, commingling in equal parts the tenderness of Perugino and Lo Spagna (?), the smoothness of Credi, and the ruddiness of the Ferrarese, with a veil of coldness over all. Francia is, in fact, to Perugino what Cima is to Bellini. He is at home in quiet scenes, where he introduces a pretty, pleasant Madonna, a kindly Babe, and saints of small and elegant stature; but he has neither the fervency of Vannucci nor the power of Conegliano. When Raphael declared that Francia's Virgins were the most beautifully devout that he had ever seen, he was indulging in flattery. When Michael Angelo said

Misericordia, at the request of Anton Bentivoglio, a red-cross knight, who is introduced praying among the three shepherds. A mitred bishop and two saints are at the right, and in the centre kneels the happy, smiling, adoring Virgin. The peculiarity of the picture lies in the intensity of concentration with which every thought and look are fixed upon the Shining Child, who lies on a little pallet in the midst. Beside Him two finches are singing on a spray which grows out of a cleft in the rocks.

10. Tintoret's Nativity in the Scuola of San Rocco is marked by all his originality. The scene is placed in the upper loft of the stable; the ox and the ass are below, and near them is a peacock. A cock is pecking among the straw. The Child lies in a sort of wicker cradle, and the Virgin is lifting the veil to shew her Son to a group of noble peasant-shepherds. The face of the Virgin is one of the loveliest which Tintoret ever painted.

10. The latest picture of the Nativity in our Gallery is by Bernardo Cavallino († 1654), a member of the not very estimable School of Naples. He was an eclectic and a naturalist, who killed himself at thirty-one by drunkenness. From painters of such schools we can expect no noble treatment of so divine a subject. Only a thoughtless painter would have debased his theme by so frivolous an incident as a white dog springing at the patient ox of the manger! The painter was probably wholly unconscious of the self-betrayal involved in this incident. Yet it shews decisively how far the divinest of scenes had been degraded

to Francia's son that his father's living creations were better than his painted ones, he gave vent to the same scorn with which he had already treated Perugino; there was as little cause for the exaggerated praise of the first as for the excessive abuse of the second." — I. 562. "The Italians describe his style as *antico-moderno*, the intermediate style which preceded that of the great sixteenth-century masters." — Wornum. The supposed correspondence between Francia and Raphael is now regarded as spurious, and there is no ground for Vasari's story that Francia died of chagrin when Raphael's *St. Cecilia* came to Bologna, and he saw how much his own skill was surpassed.

into mere "subjects" in which the artist thought of little beyond his own skill and originality, with which his patrons were content so long as they obtained a picture which looked decorative as a piece of furniture. Better things might have been hoped of Mazzolino († 1528), the "glowworm," as he has been called, of the learned and noble School of Ferrara. Yet he, too, in his Holy Family, introduces a little St. John, who, instead of being absorbed in the scene before him, is protecting a cat from the persecutions of a monkey!

11. Of the German School there is a very lovely Nativity by Albert Dürer in the fifth plate in his *Kleine Passion.*

There is, as usual, the ruined penthouse. On the right kneel two old shepherds, one of whom wears an expression of almost shrinking reverence. Over the tree, in front of which they kneel, flames a large star. Through the broken arch is seen in the far distance the Herald Angel, appearing to the shepherds as they keep their flocks by night. At the left, his face full of joy, stands the aged Joseph with a lantern in one hand. Exactly in the centre of the picture is a basket, laid on the straw, in which lies the little newborn child, who stretches out His right hand to the Virgin Mother. She kneels before the cradle in adoration, with her arms crossed upon her breast. Behind the cradle kneels a lovely child-angel, who, with infinite solicitude and tenderness, is bending over the Infant Saviour. It is difficult to describe the charm of this little picture in its absolute simplicity and perfect composition.

THE ADORATION OF THE SHEPHERDS.

"Say, ye holy shepherds, say,
What's your joyful news to-day?
Wherefore have ye left your sheep
On the lonely mountain steep?"
— *Carol.*

The Adoration of the Shepherds and the Adoration of the Magi are subjects often treated as immediate adjuncts of the Nativity, and therefore we need say but little of them separately.

The former is not so favourite a subject as the latter, because it gave less scope for splendour and variety. The central idea of its best treatment was to illustrate the reward and the rapture of the lowly and faithful.[1]

In early Christian Art the Adoration of the Shepherds, as in Botticelli's Nativity, is often *combined* with the Adoration of the Magi. The latter was an exceedingly common theme, as may be seen in the many plates furnished by Fleury; of the former there is scarcely a single separate representation.

No painter has treated the subject more beautifully than LORENZO LOTTO — whom even the vile Pietro Aretino addressed: "O Lotto, good as goodness, and virtuous as virtue." His picture is at his native Bergamo, where

[1] Fleury says (*L'Évangile*, I. 63): "À Rome et dans l'occident, on dût peu s'occuper des bergers; tandis que les mages viennent continuellement dans les monuments chrétiens des premiers temps." In the very few representations of this subject Jesus is always *pannis involutus* like an Italian child. The reader will be interested to see the only specimen known to Fleury of the shepherds without the Magi. It is from a bas-relief in the Lateran, and is of the fourth century. (Fleury, Pl. XIX., Fig. 4.) The shepherd, known by his *pedum*, is being led by an angel.

alone his true greatness can be seen.[1] One of the shepherds has brought a lamb, and holds it towards the Infant Christ. It is on its fore knees, and seems to look down with astonished love as the little golden-headed Babe lifts up to the innocent creature His white arms to clasp its neck. Behind this shepherd stands a great angel with blue wings outspread, whose hand rests on the man's coarse dress, while a second angel lays his hand on the shoulder of another shepherd. The Virgin, a splendid figure in crimson, blue, and white, kneels adoring, over the Child, who lies partly on a blue fold of her robe, and partly in a wicker crate covered with green grass.

Lotto was the pupil of Bellini and the friend of Titian. He resembles Luini in the stainless purity of his art, as he resembles Fra Angelico in the peaceful inwardness and holy retirement of his monastic life. He died at last the pensioner of a charity which he himself had founded. In 1548, Aretino wrote of this pure soul, "Your heart knows no envy; on the contrary, you feel a pleasure in seeing in other masters the beauties which you think you do not possess. . . . But if you excel them in painting, you leave them far behind in the practice of a real piety. Heaven has in store for you a glory which is not to be compared to the praises of men."[2]

There is an Adoration of the Shepherds by ROMANINO at Brescia, which shews all the skill and quaintness of the painter. The Virgin is dressed in a splendid robe of white sheeny satin, with a border of gold over a crimson tunic. She is adoring the lovely Child, who lies on white satin. A shepherd leans over Him with outspread hands. Three cherubs float above with a cartellino; two of them are foreshortened in a startling manner.

[1] It is in the Palazzo Martinengo.

[2] On Lotto, see Lanzi, p. 142. Rio, whose chief admiration is for the mystic school, recalled attention to this unequal but delightful painter, whose impressible genius preserves the trace of various influences, and shows affinities with Correggio.

The Adoration of the Shepherds by REMBRANDT, in our National Gallery, painted in 1646, impresses us far more by its depths of light and shade than by its treatment of a sacred motive. As in Correggio's famous *La Notte* in the Dresden Gallery, all the light in the picture comes from the Holy Child, and this light entirely dims the glow of the lantern which one of the shepherds carries. Mr. Ruskin says, much too severely, that it was the aim of Rembrandt "to paint the foulest things he could see by rushlight"; but certainly such greatness as he has is not that of being a religious painter. In Correggio's picture the central thought is the radiant Babe, but in Rembrandt's *Bible by Candlelight*, we stagger, as Hazlitt says, "from one abyss of obscurity to another," and think of nothing but glimmerings and shadows. Rembrandt, artistically, at any rate, "loved darkness rather than light."

There is another treatment of the subject by VELASQUEZ. It is based on the depraved style of Ribera and Caravaggio, and was entirely unsuited for the genius of the painter. It is a naturalistic and somewhat vulgar picture. The shepherds — peasants of the most ordinary type — are bringing lambs and fowls, and a boy is offering his animals to the Infant Christ. "No Virgin ever descended into Velasquez's studio," says Ford, "no cherubs hovered around his pallet. He did not work for priest, or ecstatic anchorite, but for plumed kings and booted knights; hence the neglect and partial failure of his holy and mythologic pictures — holy, like those of Correggio, in nothing but name; groups rather of low life, and that so truly painted, as still more to mar, by a treatment not in harmony with the subject, the elevated sentiment."[1]

The most famous picture of CORREGGIO is *La Notte* in the Dresden Gallery. It has all his sweetness and incontestable charm, his mastery of colouring, his sunny softness, his technical skill in chiaroscuro. The light from

[1] Ford's *Handbook for Travellers in Spain.*

the Divine Child, as He lies on the straw of the manger, irradiates the happy smiling features of the Virgin, and dazzles the astonished gaze of the humble shepherdess, who is bringing a pair of turtle-doves.[1] A poor old shepherd is about to shroud his face with his mantle, and the splendid youth by his side turns away in rapturous astonishment. Behind the Virgin, Joseph is tethering the ass, and in the sky, a group of angels of exquisite loveliness — but shewing the same characteristic foreshortening which made a canon of Parma say to Correggio, after looking at his decoration of the Cathedral dome, "ci avete fatto guazzetto di rane"[2] — are singing their impassioned Hosannahs. Correggio was a man of somewhat morbid excitability, and he is more at home, it has been truly said, in Pagan or semi-Pagan subjects, which give room for a certain intoxication of sensuous joy than for the raptures of divine love. His Virgins are softly voluptuous; his angels the radiant genii of heathendom. "Peut-on réconnaitre le Précurseur," asks Gruyer, respecting another of his pictures at Dresden, "dans cet éphèbe délirant de bonheur, qui regarde le spectateur avec tant de provocation? Est-ce bien la Vierge enfin cette femme charmante, qui répond avec une si douce langeur aux régards ravis de ses adorateurs? Les douçeurs ravissantes de ses anges et de ses saints répondent précisement à un état de crise, pendant lequel la dévotion elle-même allait donner l'exemple de cette sensibilité, j'allais dire de cette sensualité religieuse." "When a nation has reached its culminating point," says Morelli, "we see everywhere, in daily life, as well as in literature and in art, that grace comes to be valued more than character. So it was in Italy in the closing

[1] Correggio here follows the legends of the Apocryphal Gospels. "And lo the cave was filled with light more beautiful than the glittering of lamps and candles and brighter than the light of the sun." — *Arab. Evang. Infant.* "There appeared a great light in the cave, so that their eyes could not bear it." — *Protevang.* "Praesepe jam fulget tuum." — St. Ambrose. These fancies were based on Is. ix. 2.

[2] "You have made us a fricassee of frogs."

ADORATION OF THE SHEPHERDS. *Correggio.*

From the Picture in the Dresden Gallery.

decades of the fifteenth and the opening of the sixteenth century."[1]

The appended sketch from a lovely picture by FIORENZO DI LORENZO, in the Gallery at Perugia, will shew the

Fiorenzo di Lorenzo.

difference of feeling which separates the Perugian painter of the fifteenth century from the Parmese of the sixteenth.

[1] "Der Kunstler ist zwar der Sohn Seiner Zeit: aber schlimm für ihn, wenn er zugleich ihr Zögling, oder gar ihr Günstling ist." — Schiller.

THE ADORATION OF THE MAGI.

"Reges de Sabia venient
Aurum, thus, myrrham offerent."
— PISTOR.

"Lo! star-led chiefs Assyrian odours bring
And bending Magi seek their Infant King."
— HEBER.

THE ANGELS' SONG.

"What means this glory round our feet,"
The Magi mused, "more bright than morn?"
And voices chanted, clear and sweet,
"To-day the Prince of Peace is born."

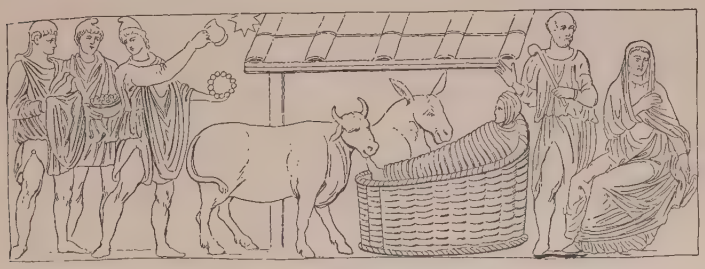
"What means that star," the shepherds said,
"That brightens through the rocky glen?"
And angels, answering overhead,
Sang, "Peace on earth, good-will to men!"

And they who do their souls no wrong,
But keep at eve the faith of morn,
Shall daily hear the angels' song,
"To-day the Prince of Peace is born!"
— JAMES RUSSELL LOWELL.

Of the Adoration of the Magi, I give one of the earliest and a very interesting specimen from the beautiful tomb of

the exarch Isaac in the Church of St. Vitalis in Ravenna. It belongs to the sixth century, and the figures still retain

something of the antique grace.[1] The Magi, as usual, are dressed in Phrygian caps, anaxyrides, short tunics, and flowing mantles, and each is carrying a bowl of gifts to



Fourth-century Sarcophagus.

place in the outstretched hands of the Infant. He sits on the knees of His mother, behind whose nimbus shines the mystic Star of the East. The sole object of the early Christian artists was to recall the event with the most absolute simplicity.

In later days the scene became more and more magnificent. The Magi are exalted into "Kings of the

[1] There is another early one on an ancient tomb, given by Fleury, *L'Évangile*, Pl. XX., Fig. 2; and another in the cemetery of SS. Peter and Marcellina, given by Lafenestre.

East," and are types alike of the Gentiles, of the rich, and of Humanity in its three periods of youth, manhood, and old age. The apocryphal Gospels and Eastern legends were incorporated into the representation.[1] The eldest of the "star-led chiefs" is the old man Gaspar, with his "long down-silvering beard"; Balthasar is a man in the prime of life; and Melchior is a fair youth. Often, too, they represent the three races of mankind — Shem, Ham, and Japheth. The richness and quaintness of the possible accessories, the depth of symbolism, and the variety of treatment which the subject admitted, made it one of the favourite themes of religious art.

1. The *Adoration of the Kings* by GENTILE DA FABRIANO, in the Academy at Florence, is a truly splendid work, not only rich and bright, but full of feeling. The details are magnificent, and the finish is extraordinary. The hand of the Child, resting on the bald head of the old white-bearded king who kneels in utter lowliness to kiss His feet, is a marvel of grace, dignity, and pathos.[2]

2. The reader will see, in our National Gallery, specimens of the way in which the scene is treated by the Florentines, Fra Angelico, Filippino Lippi, and Peruzzi;[3]

[1] The monk John of Hildesheim, who died in 1379, wrote a *Historia Trium Regum*, printed by Wynkyn de Worde, in 1499. He said that the Magi were "kings of India, Caldee, and Persidee." Melchior was king of India, Balthasar of Godolie and Arabia, and Jasper of Tarsis, who was "moste of stature, and he was a black Ethioppe wythoute doubte." "These were the firste of myscreantes that byleved in Criste." The Venerable Bede says, "Magi tres partes mundi significant Asiam, Africam, et Europam." They were supposed to be sixty, forty, and twenty years of age. The names are first found in an ecclesiastical history of 1179.

[2] Reproduced by Mr. Cole in Stillman's *Old Italian Masters*, p. 80.

[3] In this picture (No. 218) it is said that the Magi are portraits of Titian, Raphael, and Michael Angelo. Botticelli's Adoration in the Uffizi is not one of his better works. The old Mage is a portrait of Cosimo de' Medici, and the two others of Giuliano (murdered in 1516) and Giovanni (Leo X.). There are at Florence two Adorations by Ghirlandajo in the Church of the Innocents (A.D. 1488) and in the Uffizi; and by L. da Vinci, reproduced by Rosini.

by the Ferrarese Dosso Dossi; the Brescian Vincenzo Foppa; the Flemish Gerard David; by a Venetian of the school of Giorgione; and by PAOLO VERONESE. The latter picture was painted in 1573, and Veronese often recurred to a subject which gave scope to his cheerful and splendour-loving genius. I quote the description of Sir F. W. Burton, and need only add to it that the ruined building is perhaps meant for a Pagan temple in which the manifestation of Christ to the Gentiles is taking place.

"The picture represents a ruined building of Roman architecture, with pillars, a portion of which is roofed with thatch, and has served as a stable. Under this roof, on the right of the spectator, is seated the Virgin, somewhat elevated on some loose blocks, and holding in her arms the Infant, who is receiving the adoration of the three Wise Men; the foremost is kneeling; the second is behind him, in the same attitude; and on the extreme left of the spectator stands the third. A ray of light, with several winged cherubs hovering along its course, falls upon the the Infant; above is a group of infant angels. The retinue of the Magi are behind, some bearing presents, others attending to their horses and camels. Some peasants are looking down from the ruins on the Divine Infant; another figure is seen on the right with some dogs. On the same side are the ox and the ass; some young lambs placed below the Infant appear to be a shepherd's offering."[1]

3. DÜRER'S Adoration is a very fine composition. The Virgin, with her head (as often in Dürer's pictures) a little on one side, is seated against the broken stone wall of a ruined castle. The face is full of joy. The Child, with charming grace, stretches His open hand towards the old gray-haired king, who kneels and bows his head before Him with folded hands and a face full of happy wonder. He has presented his gift, which is held by Joseph, who

[1] Paul Veronese painted the subject at least four times, and Rubens at least six.

is gazing at the scene over the Virgin's shoulder. The second king holds the goblet, which he means to present, but pauses to beckon forward the third, who is holding his plumed hat in his hand, and bending the knee, but seems too timid to approach. This king is a negro, though his face is white. In the distance, on one side, with others of the retinue, is a man in chain-armour holding some of the offerings in his hand. On the other side are two shepherds. In the sky above gleams the mystic star, and three boy-angels chant the Gloria. "One of the oxen, whose face peers out from the old shed, rubs his head lovingly against the aged Joseph, and his solemn eyes look as if he had caught some glimmering of the divine mystery enacted before him."[1] Another, painted by Dürer in 1500, for the Elector, Frederick the Wise, and now in the Uffizi, is equally striking, though wholly different.[2]

4. But there is perhaps no nobler *Adoration of the Magi* than the fresco by Bernardino Luini at Saronno. The beautiful and modest Virgin is leaning against the manger wall, with the ox and ass behind her. The Holy Child, with His left hand, holds the edge of her veil; His little right hand blesses a grand old king in robes of ermine and golden chain, whose sword and turban are carried by a beautiful youth. Behind him is the youthful Melchior, who is represented as a fine negro; Balthazar kneels to present his offering on the other side. One of the attendants shades his eyes from the star which gleams above the stable roof. Down the hillside come others of the retinue leading horses, camels, and a giraffe. A choir of lovely child-angels sing their Christmas carols in the sky.

5. The Adoration, by Domenico Ghirlandajo, in the Ospizio degli Innocenti at Florence, is his best work. Specially beautiful is the attendant youth with the goblet

[1] It is in the *Life of the Virgin*. See Thausing, I. 331 (English translation), and Heaton, p. 123.

[2] Reproduced by Woltmann and Woermann, II. 130 (English translation).

at the Virgin's right. The aged Gaspar holds in his large grasp the tiny foot of the Child, and tenderly kisses it, while Mary raises her hand in astonishment. In the distance, on either side of the landscape, are the shepherds gazing at the Herald Angel, and the Massacre of the Innocents. The picture was painted in 1488. "A delightful incident in this picture is the presentation of two exquisitely natural little children by St. John the Baptist on one side, and St. John the Evangelist on the other."

6. TINTORET'S Adoration in the Scuola di San Rocco is the most finished picture in that marvellous exhibition of his power and originality.[1] "The whole picture is nothing but a large star, of which Christ is the centre; all the figures, even the timbers of the roof, radiate from the small bright figure on which the countenance of the flying angels are bent, the star itself, gleaming through the timbers above, being quite subordinate. The placing of the two doves, as principal points of light in the front of the picture, reminding the spectator of the poverty of the Mother, whose Child is receiving the offerings and adoration of three monarchs, is one of Tintoret's master touches; the whole scene, indeed, is conceived in his happiest manner. Nothing can be at once more humble and more dignified than the bearing of the kings; and there is a sweet reality given to the whole by the Madonna's stooping forward and lifting her hand in admiration of the vase of gold which has just been set before the Child, though she does so with such gentleness and quietness that her dignity is not in the least disturbed by the simplicity of the action."[2]

[1] "The haunting sense of powers almost irresistible gave a terrible fascination to Michelangelo's works which are swayed by this sense as by a demonic presence. Tintoretto felt this fascination because he was in sympathy with the spirit which took form in colossal torsoes and limbs. To him these were not, as they were to Michelangelo's enrobed followers, merely new patterns after which to model the nude." — Berenson, *Venetian Painters*, 51.

[2] *Stones of Venice*, III. 327.

Sir E. Burne Jones, in his water-colour picture of *The Star of Bethlehem*, has painted a very lovely Adoration of the Kings. The lowly cattle-shed is of the humblest character, but stands in a garden of lilies and other flowers, with which, at Christ's Advent, the wilderness has blossomed as the rose. The wattle-work behind her gives the symbolism of the "garden enclosed." Behind her, with the *keffyeh* drawn over his head, stands St. Joseph, who has been gathering a bundle of sticks. The sweet-faced Virgin is seated on a heap of straw, and holds on her knees the marvellous Child, who has turned His head to look at the approaching Mages. They are led by an angel, whose head is crowned with flowers, and who holds the star in his hand. Gaspar, the most aged of the Three Kings, proffers a jewelled box. His crown lies at his feet, among the flowers. Melchior, behind him, wears a helmet, and a suit of gleaming chain-armour, with a broadsword in its jewelled scabbard. His golden crown is in his left hand. Balthasar, the third, holds his offerings in both hands, and wears a robe of gorgeous embroidery. The eyes of all three are intently fixed upon the Holy Child. "Individually and collectively," says Mr. Malcom Bell, "they are all exquisite, and the self-abasement of wealth and power before the weak majesty of a powerless Mother and Babe, has never found a truer or fairer exposition."[1]

[1] E. Burne Jones, *A Record and Review*, p. 99.

ADORATION OF THE MAGI. *Sir E. Burne Jones, Bart.*

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Book VI.

INCIDENTS OF THE INFANCY.

"Mediæval art is but the expression of the joy of those who have found the young child with Mary His mother." — Ruskin.

"Autrefois le temple des arts était le temple de Dieu même." — Alfred de Musset.

"All real Art is the disemprisoned soul of fact." — Carlyle.

I.

THE CIRCUMCISION.

"Oh, more exceeding love, or law more just?
Just law indeed, but more exceeding love!"
— MILTON.

THE Circumcision of Christ was naturally not a very favourite motive of Mediæval Art, nor is the scene once depicted in the Catacombs or on the sarcophagi. Burckhardt rightly calls it "an insupportable subject." It was, however, introduced as one of "the Seven Sorrows of Mary," — still symbolized in Romish Churches by the Seven Swords in her heart, — which were sometimes painted in a series with her "seven joys." This aspect of the Circumcision is strikingly indicated by Albrecht Dürer, in whose engraving "the Virgin alone is stricken with grief, while the other mothers, who, in accordance with the traditional mistake, are bringing their children *to the Temple* to be circumcised, exhibit no emotion."

We have but two specimens of the Circumcision in the National Gallery. One is by Luca Signorelli. The picture was greatly admired by Vasari, who says that the Child was repainted, and spoiled in repainting, by Sodoma. The old man with uplifted hands is meant for the aged Simeon, and the richly vested High Priest is said to be a portrait of Signorelli himself.

Our only other Circumcision is by the Venetian, Marco Marziale, one of the assistants of Giovanni Bellini. It is not in the least valuable from religious feeling, which it wholly fails to express, but it shews an amazing wealth of

decorative ingenuity, especially in the vestments, draperies, and arabesques. It is an *ex voto* picture, with likenesses of the Raimondi family, who were the donors.[1]

In the hands of Fra Bartolommeo,[2] and other serious painters, the desire was to express the Child's willing sufferance of pain for our sakes. They put into colour the thought of Milton: —

> "He who with all Heaven's blazonry erewhile
> Entered the world, now bleeds to give us ease.
> Alas, how soon our sin
> Sore doth begin
> His infancy to seize!
> For we by rightful doom remediless
> Were lost in death till He that dwelt above
> High-throned in secret bliss, for us frail dust
> Emptied His glory even to nakedness."

Even Mantegna failed to render the subject of the Circumcision endurable. His painting is in the Tribune of the Uffizi.[3] The circumcising priest is a stately old man holding the knife in his right hand. A boy beside him has a dish on which lie a pair of scissors and some lint. The Virgin has a sad and anxious expression, and the Child turns to her from the priest, and clings to her robe with an expression of something like agony. The painting of the yellow jasper pillar, the gray marble capitals, and the rich architectural details are quite superb. The Madonna is in a robe of peacock blue, touched with gold; the priest's robe is of light blue shot with purple, and with a fringe of gold. His tunic is white, and a towel hangs over his shoulders.

It will be observed that the painters, from the earliest days in which the subject was painted at all, chose to assume that it took place in the Temple. But circum-

[1] See G. T. Robinson, *Art Journal*, June, 1886.

[2] See the sketch in Rosini, V. 45.

[3] The other parts of this striking triptych represent the Adoration of the Magi and the Ascension.

cision was a private and family event, and it is reasonably certain that the Circumcision of our Lord, like that of John, took place in the house. Painters seem sometimes to confuse it with the Presentation in the Temple, a wholly different ceremony, with a wholly different purpose — the Purification of the Virgin.

The earliest known attempt to delineate the Presentation is in a fifth-century mosaic of Santa Maria Maggiore, of which a sketch is appended.[1]

There is a very simple, but singularly charming Presentation by Giotto, in the possession of Mr. K. Willett. In the centre is a marble canopy, not in very good perspective; on it stands an altar. The aged Simeon is on the right, with the Child in his arms. The Child has laid one little hand on the mouth and beard of the old man, but is turning away from him and stretches His other arm and hand towards the Virgin, who is holding out both her hands towards Him in a most natural and motherly attitude. Anna stands behind Simeon, and St. Joseph behind the Virgin. The background is gold.

There is a very noble Presentation by Fra Bartolommeo in the Gallery at Vienna, in which the Child blesses St. Anna and St. Elisabeth on the right, and a majestic St.

[1] Fleury, Pl. XIV., Fig. 1.

Joseph is carrying the basket with the two young pigeons. The Virgin holding in her hand one little foot, and clasping the other leg near the ancle, seems loth to yield her sweet burden into the hands of the aged Simeon. Behind is a figure of Moses with the Tables of the Law.

In Carpaccio's *Presentation in the Temple*, painted in 1510, for the Church of San Giobbe, and now in the Venice Academy, the painter reaches his greatest height, and almost equals Giovanni Bellini himself. The scene is placed before an arcade of rich marble, in which is an altar. On the one side stands the venerable Simeon, dressed as a magnificent pontiff in his robe fringed with bells and pomegranates, and in a superbly painted and embroidered cope, of which the train is carried by two nimbus-bearing attendants. On the compartments of the orphreys of the cope are painted scenes from the Old Testament. Simeon is met by the Virgin, who is arrayed in a pale crimson robe and mantle of peacock blue, with a white veil on her head. She carries in her arms a noble Child. Behind her, one saintly woman looks on with calm adoration, and another carries the basket with the turtle-doves. On the marble step beneath are three wingless angioletti, with flute and viols, of whom the one in the centre is perhaps the most charming figure which Carpaccio ever painted.

II.

THE MASSACRE OF THE INNOCENTS AND THE FLIGHT INTO EGYPT.

"Salvete flores martyrum,
Quos, lucis ipso in limine,
Christi insecutor sustulit
Ceu turbo nascentes rosas."
—PRUDENT, *De SS. Innocentt.*

"Rama heard that woeful cry
Of Rachel weeping for children's love;
Uncomforted because her babes are gone."
—SIR EDWIN ARNOLD.

THE Massacre of the Innocents is a subject which has had a sort of ghastly and terrible attraction for many painters, but I give no specimens of the scene, as it only belongs indirectly to the personal Life of Christ on earth.[1] The Flight into Egypt does not seem to have been painted till the eleventh century, when it appears in a Greek manuscript of the *Bibliothèque Nationale* at Paris. The early pictures all follow the Byzantine rule of the Monk Panselinos, "Joseph and the Mother of God fly into Egypt. The Holy Virgin, seated on an ass with the Infant, looks behind her. Joseph, carrying a rod, his staff over his shoulder. A young man leads an ass laden with a basket of rushes." This young man, according to an ecclesiastical tradition, which St. Jerome calls a *delira-*

[1] Mrs. Jameson points out that the Massacre of the Innocents became a popular subject after 1450, owing to the interest excited by the Ospedale degli Innocenti at Florence, which was united in 1463 with the Foundling Institution attached to the Monastery of San Gallo.

mentum apocryphorum, was James the Less, who is called *Adelphotheos*, "the brother of God." The idols are often represented tumbling to the ground and lying shattered upon their faces, as the Holy Child enters the heathen land. This incident is related in the Apocryphal Gospels. Another legend borrowed from the same source is the bending of the palm tree, at the command of the Child Jesus, to give them dates.[1]

The subject, in one or other of its aspects, has been treated by Giotto and the Giotteschi, by Titian, Paul Veronese, Peruzzi, Correggio, Domenichino, Murillo, Rubens, Van Dyck, Rembrandt, Claude, Poussin, and others. It was also painted by Albrecht Dürer, Lucas Cranach, Albrecht Altdörfer, Martin Schongauer, and Adrian Van der Werff. Some of these pictures are described and reproduced, in an excellent article in *Harper's New Monthly*, December, 1889, by Mr. H. Van Dyke (a collateral descendant of the great Sir Anthony). In Altdörfer's picture the rose-crowned Virgin is about to bathe Jesus in a fountain. He is dipping His hand in the water, and a little angel is swimming to meet Him. In Cranach's picture twelve little angels are dancing round the Virgin and Child, and two others up in a tree are destroying some young birds in a nest — perhaps meant for an eagle's nest. The symbolism of this incident is not very clear. Murillo's picture in the Hermitage at St. Petersburg has all his superficial qualities. It is peaceful, but commonplace. He treated the subject five times at least.

[1] See *Gospel of Matthew*, xviii.–xxix.; *Arab. Gospel of the Infancy*, XII.–XXV.; B. H. Cowper, *The Apocryphal Gospels*, pp. 56–64, 178–191; Hofmann, pp. 140–183. These legends further tell us that the dragons came and bowed to Him; the roses of Jericho blossomed wherever His footsteps trod; Dysmas and his fellow-robbers were overawed by His majesty; and many wonderful cures of leprosy and demoniac possession were wrought by His word. We have in the National Gallery an early Flemish *Flight into Egypt*, by Joachim Patinir (about 1520), and a *Riposo* by Pietro Mola, of the later Electic School of Bologna (about 1660), in which angels hover over the sleeping Child.

The *Rest of the Holy Family* on the road to Egypt, which the Italians call a *Riposo*, has been often painted. The most famous example is Correggio's *Madonna della Scodella* at Parma. It is called from the *Scodella*, or Metal Dish, in the hands of the Virgin, — the dish being the arms of the Scodellari family, for whom the picture was painted. It is a lovely picture, full of dreamy enchantment, but wholly meaningless. St. Joseph is bending down the branch of a palm; an angel on one side is tethering the very ill-painted ass. A sweet child-figure on the other side bends over the fountain. His hair is wreathed with a leafy garland, and he is not an angel, but a sort of little genius of the spring. In the sky, on the lumpy blue clouds, — for Correggio is incomparably inferior to Garofalo (for instance) in his clouds, — a rush of foreshortened angels — which, like those of Correggio, too often, chiefly shew their arms and legs, — is careering in an *opposite* direction, with no particular concern in the scene below.[1] Yet all is redeemed by the landscape, and by the exquisite attitude of the Child Jesus, one of whose hands rests on that of Joseph, while the other points to the Scodella. A charming picture, no doubt, for the Scodellari to possess, but there is nothing sacred in it, and to turn from it to the Madonnas of Francia or Cima, which hang near it, — especially Francia's *Madonna di San Vitale*, — is like turning from outward earthly beauty to beauty irradiated by Heaven. Correggio was infinitely more at home with the radiant, lovely, enchanting Putti in the Camera di San Paolo of the gay Abbess who desired to be painted by him as Diana.

The Flight into Egypt has been a favourite religious

[1] This, however, is an allusion to the legend about the palm which bent its boughs to give dates to the Holy Family. Jesus, in the Apocryphal *History of the Nativity of Mary*, thanks the tree, and gives it the privilege "that one of thy branches be carried away by my angels and planted in the Paradise of my Father. And this blessing will I confer upon thee, that it shall be said of all who conquer in any contest, 'You have won the palm of victory.'"

subject among the few chosen by the artists of our own day. Overbeck painted it in his sincere, but somewhat feebly pietistic manner. Lagardo shows us a drooping Virgin and a weary Joseph with a sleeping Child — "a poor little household wandering over a trackless waste." On the other hand, the picture by Luc Olivier Meeson is highly imaginative. It is called *In the Shadow of Isis*, and was painted not many years ago. The Virgin, with her sleeping Child tenderly folded in her arms, is seated at the angle of a ruined temple of Isis. Her head is encircled by a round nimbus, and the Child's by a radiating nimbus. They are seated on the shattered colossal head of some fallen Egyptian idol. On the wall of the temple we see the sculptured bas-relief of the Divine Egyptian Mother, Hathor or Isis, with the half-moon on her head; she is giving suck to Thoth. The lotus of life, and other symbols, are visible on the wall, and the cat-headed Pasht, and another deity, bend low before Isis. The Virgin is gazing up at the sculpture with a look of intense curiosity and awe. On the other side, Eastern-fashion, outstretched on his *abbeyeh* on the bare ground, lies Joseph, asleep from weariness, while the poor ass is vainly trying to allay its hunger on the scanty herbage which sprouts only here and there around the desert ruin.

Rossetti's *Flight into Egypt*, is a water-colour picture, painted in 1862. "The Holy Family are being led away by one angel, while another is closing a door, through which can be seen the slaughter of the children."

"For epic completeness, for concentrated presentation of the subject treated in the single survey the painter can command, Art can show little indeed to equal this small water-colour drawing. How familiar we have been made on the one side with the Massacre of the Innocents from Giotto's monumental treatment, down to Tintoret's wild tornado of wolfish mercenaries, with desperate mothers and slaughtered babes; and, on the other, with dark flights by night of Joseph with the Virgin Mother and Child into

Egypt upon an ass. Rossetti's imaginative vision suffers no such divided sight of subjects. All is present before him, and he will shew you all; you shall understand wherefore this slaughter and this flight, with its spiritual significance. Not of their own will they flee, for an angel with firm strides bearing a palm branch held sword-wise for defence, leads forth by the hand that quivering woman, through whose heart the clash of the murderous steel pierces in anticipation, as she huddles her Child in the folds of her mantle. It is the Virgin Mother; for the mystic sign of the Spirit guides their way in peace far from the jealousy of the tyrant, of whose bloody work we catch one glance, ere another angel shuts the vain wrath within its bounds of restraint, as he closes the Gate against all pursuit. The terrors of that night of warning are behind, but the New Day gleams over the dark hills, sanguine with the portent of sorrow yet ordained to be consummated in the blood of the Innocent One."[1]

Mr. Edwin Long's *Anno Domini* is an elaborate rendering of the actual arrival in Egypt. In the distance are the Pyramids bathed in the evening glow. Not far from them is a magnificent Egyptian temple, of which the gorgeous mural decorations represent the weighing of souls before the tribunal of Osiris. Out of the gate of its Pylon sweeps a grand procession, military and ecclesiastical, in which Apis, the sacred bull, is led forth by his attendants. A little further on we see the sacred Ark, the bearers of idols, and the Priests of Osiris, Horus and Thoth. In front walks the High Priest of Isis, in a leopard's skin, with gilded claws, bearing an Egyptian thurible full of *kyphi*, and a vase for libation. The priests wear golden bracelets and jewelled necklaces, and are clad in snow-white linen, plaited and goffered. The multitudes adore the image of Isis as it is carried past them, headed by the band of female minstrels, who wear on their foreheads the blue lotus of the Nile, and strike their timbrels and sistra.

[1] F. Shields.

In the crowd, a lover is fastening round the neck of his betrothed the amulet known as "the eye of Osiris." A negro offers for sale a tray of Egyptian gods, Isis, Osiris, Apis, Pasht, and Thoth. With these idols, some girls are trying to cure a sick child. In an opposite direction comes the Holy Family, humble and travel-soiled. The Virgin is seated upon an ass. She is robed in a dress of dark blue linen, embroidered in front, such as is still used at Bethlehem, and such as was, in all probability, worn by the humble maiden of Nazareth. By her side, with his staff and gourd, walks her husband, Joseph, whose face is full of anxious and careworn solemnity, and who, with one hand, is tenderly folding the Child's robe a little closer around Him.

The face of the Virgin is one of exquisite beauty and purity. A little in front of her lie two beautiful, undraped Egyptian children, who (like the negro) have gods for sale, and one of whom holds up to the Virgin an image of Pasht, the goddess of purity. But the eyes of the Virgin are not attracted by these children; her glance rests with tender pity on the despairing mother and her dying child, for whom the idols are of no avail. This circumstance is suggested by the legend that, when the Holy Family entered Egypt, the Virgin took in her arms a sick child, who was thus restored to health. The child grew up to be a robber, and is identified with the repentant thief upon the cross, who bears, in tradition, the name of Dysmas.

The face of the Child Jesus wears a grave and heavenly look, in which childish innocence seems to be subtly blended with something deeper and more divine.

All the details of the picture have been studied and rendered with consummate care, and the intention is humbly reverential.

Far greater, however, as a work of genius, is the famous *Triumph of the Innocents*, by Mr. Holman Hunt, exhibited in 1888. Following the traditions of the Eastern Church, Mr. Hunt supposes the Flight to take place in the second

THE TRIUMPH OF THE INNOCENTS. *W. Holman Hunt.*

By special permission of the Artist.

April of the life of the Holy Child. The Holy Family have fled by bypaths over the mountains, and have now descended into the corn-fields of a rich and balmy plain. Joseph, whose back is turned to the spectator, and who has his basket of tools over his shoulder, is leading an ass, which is painted from one of the famous Mecca breed. He gazes back in anxiety at the line of watchfires which show that Herod's soldiers are on the alert. The Virgin is dressing her Child, who has been snatched up in haste. There has been deep anguish in her look, but peace and hope are beginning to dawn upon it. The noble Child in her arms is turning to call her attention to the glorified spirits of the Martyred Innocents, towards whom He points with the corn-ears — type of the Bread of Life[1] — held in His little hands.[2] His face breaks into a glow of joy to recognize once more the throng of His little playmates, visible to Him in a spiritual light, which makes the wild dogs shrink away in terror in the distance. They are being borne along upon streams of living water which breaks into globe-like bubbles, in which are imaged various typical scenes of Messianic prophecy and fulfilment. The front group of the little Martyrs has now recognized the new beatitude, and the leading child holds a thurible of kindled incense, while the others scatter flowers before the feet of their Infant King. The midmost group of children is garlanded with flowers. They carry in their hands the branches of blossoming trees, but have not yet fully real-

[1] So in a Virgin and Child, by Giovanni da Pisa (at the New Gallery in 1894), the Child holds an ear of millet in His right hand.

[2] Perhaps there may be a slight reference also to the legend that, in the Flight, the Holy Family passed through corn-fields, and the Virgin asked the husbandman to say that if any one asked "when the Son of Man passed by," they should answer, "When we were sowing this corn." The same night the corn sprang up and ripened, and next morning they were reaping it. They gave the answer to the soldiers of Herod, who turned back, thinking that pursuit was useless. Hans Memlinc introduces these husbandmen into his picture in the Munich Pinakothek (about 1480. See W. H. I. Weale, *Hans Memlinc*, p. 10).

ized their state. One of them gazes down at the rent which the sword-thrust has made in his dress, but is amazed to find no corresponding wound upon his glorified body. Behind, in the sky, are three of the poor Innocents who have not yet awakened to the bliss of heaven, and still bear upon their faces the expression of grief or sleep. Near them float shadows as of starry crowns. The picture unites the deepest mysticism with the most intense realism, and its glorious colouring and majestic thought led Mr. Ruskin to call it "the greatest religious picture of our time." He said "that not even Donatelli or the Della Robbias at their best, could more than rival the freedom and felicity of motion, or the subtlety of harmonious line, in the happy wreath of the angel children." [1]

[1] The picture is reproduced in *Harper's Magazine*, December, 1889; and in the Christmas number of the *Art Journal* for 1893. Dante Rossetti said of one of Mr. Hunt's pictures that "the solemn human soul seems to vibrate through it like a bell in a forest."

III.

THE RETURN TO NAZARETH.

"Bud forth as a rose growing by a brook of the field." — *Ecclus.* xxxix. 13.

It might have been thought that the Return of the Holy Family to Nazareth was an idyllic scene which would have inspired many an artist's pencil. It is, however, scarcely ever represented. There is not one picture of it in Fleury, though his illustrations go down to the thirteenth century; nor is a single specimen given by Rosini in his *Storia della Pittura*. Indeed, almost the only picture which I can remember is a recent one by Mr. Dobson, some of whose religious pictures recall the sweet expressiveness of Fra Angelico. It was painted in 1857, and was a beautiful specimen of purist painting. Mr. Ruskin criticised it as "very tender in expression, but commonplace; and in general idea more or less false or improbable." Nor has the actual Home of Nazareth been often painted. Practically, however, this is the subject of one of Albrecht Dürer's loveliest and most characteristic designs in the *Life of the Virgin*, though he somewhat strangely chose to call it a *Repose in Egypt*. The supposed scene is Matarea, near Cairo, where the Virgin's Fountain and sycamore are still shewn. In describing it I shall partly borrow the aid of Professor Thausing. In an open courtyard, in which are cocks and hens, and from which is seen a hill, crowned with towers, Joseph stands at work at his carpentering, and is hollowing out a trough. The chips of wood are

being playfully collected in a basket by boy-angels, one of whom has roguishly set the master's hat upon his little

The Repose in Egypt. (Dürer.)

head, and another puts a long splinter to his mouth as though it were a trumpet. Two of them behind Joseph

are amusing themselves with a windmill, and the little comrades run along the edge of the saw-pit holding each other by the hand. Joseph himself is just pausing from his toil. He gazes thoughtfully, axe in hand, at the group formed by the young Mother and the Child as she sits happy with her distaff and spindle, and rocks the cradle. Angels press round them with interest, and admire Mary's work, while one brings her flowers. St. Elizabeth and the young Baptist sit close beside her, and the little John is looking into the tiny face of the Babe in its cradle. In the heavens appears a half figure of God the Father in the attitude of blessing, with the Dove beneath Him. It is a picture of holy labour and of the purest domestic bliss, a bliss which compensates the poor exiles even for their home. All through his Life of the Virgin, Dürer has touched very powerfully one chord of domestic feeling. It is, in fact, the apotheosis of family life with the whole fulness of the Divine approval outpoured upon it. In it the painter preaches the new ethics that Luther afterwards declared in joyful accents to his fellow-countrymen when he said that "marriage was the most excellent state on earth," and that there existed "no companionship more full of love, of friendship, and of bliss than a happy wedded life."[1]

One of Murillo's best pictures is the Holy Family known as *El Pajarito*, from the goldfinch which the Child Jesus holds in one hand, while with the other He plays with a little white dog. The Virgin has been spinning, St. Joseph has been planing wood, but both have paused in their work to contemplate the scene.

But the shop of the carpenter seems to be, on the whole, a modern subject. The two conspicuous instances of it, which at once present themselves to the memory, are an

[1] Thausing, I. 333. A pillar of rude and curious construction is copied from one in the hall of Dürer's house. Heaton, 125. Compare the catalogues of Birtsch and Heller and Eye's, *Leben Albrecht Dürers*, 286, 319; W. Schmidt, *A. Dürer* (Dohme, p. 20).

early work of Sir John Millais, and Holman Hunt's *The Shadow of Death*.[1]

Sir J. E. Millais' picture, which we here reproduce, has all the charm and seriousness which marked the works of the Pre-Raphaelite Brotherhood. It is one of the painter's earliest works, but it is one which would have delighted Botticelli or Fra Bartolommeo. It represents a carpenter's shop, along which run large trestles with rough planks upon them. At one end of it St. Joseph has been labouring; at the other, a fine youth, presumably one of the brethren of the Lord, continues his work with unsympathetic indifference. Jesus, a young boy, has wounded His hand on a large projecting nail, which an aged woman, intended probably for St. Anna, who stands on the further side of the table, has been trying to pull out with a pair of pincers. The Virgin, seeing the wound, which is in the centre of the palm of the right hand, has come forward in deep anxiety, and has thrust her arm through the Child's left arm while she is impressing upon His cheek an agonized kiss. She is very simply dressed in a dark coloured robe with a white coif which covers her head, and her expression, apart from the momentary distress, is worn and almost haggard. Joseph has leant forward, and is resting one hand on the Child's shoulder, while with the other he bends back His hand to look at the wound, from which a drop of blood has fallen on the instep of His foot. The wound in the hand and the blood-drop on the foot foreshadow two of the Five Wounds which were to come. An exquisitely beautiful child with dark curly hair, who wears round his loins a strip of camel's skin, is perhaps intended for the youthful Baptist. He is coming round the table with a metal basin of water to wash the wound. He wears an expression of anxious and loving sympathy.

[1] The Pre-Raphaelite school had "a total originality in the sternly materialistic though deeply reverent veracity, with which alone of all schools of painters this brotherhood of Englishmen has conceived the circumstances of the Life of Christ." — Ruskin, *Art of England*, p. 109.

THE CARPENTER'S SHOP. *Sir J. E. Millais, Bart.*

By permission of the Artist.

The Holy Child Himself is barefooted, and is clad in a seamless tunic which He is holding back with one hand to prevent it from being stained. He has a soft, gentle, but almost effeminate beauty, more winning perhaps than that of the other boy, but far less virile.[1] All the accessories are symbolic. A dove broods on the rung of a ladder, which rests against the wall. Through the open window some wandering sheep of an untended herd are looking in as though searching for their shepherd. The shavings on the floor recall the rude outline of a Latin cross. The motto of the picture is from Zechariah xiii. 1. "And one shall say unto Him, what are these wounds in Thine hands? Then He shall answer, those with which I was wounded in the house of My friends." The verse, it need hardly be said, is only a distant symbolic application, — a sort of Christian targum on the words of the ancient prophecy, not unlike some of those which we find in St. Matthew's Gospel. In the original, they have no reference whatever to Christ, but involve a widely different, and indeed wholly unconnected, connotation.[2]

Mr. Holman Hunt's *Shadow of Death* (1876) is more recent, and, having been painted in the maturity of the artist's powers, is better known. It is one of the very few pictures in which Art has tried to answer the question, "Is not this the Carpenter?" So far as I know, there was not one ancient or mediæval picture which represented Jesus as a young man exercising in the village of Nazareth that humble trade by which He glorified all labour. Mr. Hunt alone has yielded to the impulse of his own strong and simple faith, by painting "the Lord of Time and All the Worlds," earning His daily bread as a Galilean artisan.

[1] "Millais sees a young Christ in the delicate boy with the wounded hand in the dreary and comfortless carpenter's shop. Hunt sees a crucified Christ in the tired workman, overtasked in the calm sunset." — E. Wood, *D. G. Rossetti*, p. 201.

[2] Zech. xiii. 1. It is part of a passage which refers to wounds inflicted upon themselves by false prophets, which, in the subsequent ill-repute of such pretenders, they are anxious to explain away.

He has represented Jesus in His Humanity, accepting the common lot of the vast majority of the human race. He wears no nimbus or aureole, but is weary at eventide after

The Shadow of Death. (W. Holman Hunt.)
By permission of Messrs. T. Agnew & Sons.

long hours of manual toil. Leaving the saw in its plank, He uplifts His arms to utter the *Shemah*, the evening

prayer. His eyes are turned heavenwards, His lips are opened in supplication. The Virgin is kneeling at His right. Contrasting the humble realities of the present with the splendid omens of the past, she is fondly opening the gleaming pearly coffer which contains the gifts of the Magi, — a golden crown and bowls, and an incense-burner of green enamel. But suddenly glancing up she has caught sight of a shadow on the wall, and, though her back is turned to the spectator, the sudden arrest of attention expressed by her attitude shews her awe-stricken alarm. For what she sees is the Shadow of Death, and the shadow of a Death by Crucifixion. On the wall behind Jesus, the rack and tools are so arranged as to give the semblance of a cross, and on this cross is shewn His shadow as He stands with His arms outstretched. In this picture, then, we have an epitome of the Life of Jesus. The gifts of the Magi recall His Infancy; the carpenter's shop, His Youth and Manhood; the shadow, His awful Sacrifice. The clouds of Golgotha throw their darkness and their sunset-crimson on the golden mists of Bethlehem and the holy innocence of Nazareth.

> "That Shadow dear upon the wall,
> Where level rays of evening fall,
> And bid us view the Lord uprear
> His tired arms in the Sunset clear —
> Let it console us, not appal;
> That Shadow has a voice for all
> Whom other shadows may enthral;
> It soothes away our mortal fear,
> That Shadow dear."[1]

As another modern illustration, we may mention Rossetti's unfinished water-colour, *The Passover in the Holy Family*, in the Ruskin Drawing School at Oxford, — another salient

[1] R. Wilton. It is a remarkable proof of the painter's high and reverent determination that he spent four years at Nazareth and Bethlehem to make accurate studies for this great picture. But to him "the story of the New Testament is not merely a Reality, not merely the greatest of Realities, but the only Reality."

example of his imaginative originality. In the background, slightly sketched in pencil, are discernible the figures of Joseph and Anna kindling the fire to roast the newly slain Paschal Lamb. Central in the picture, standing against the vine-clad doorpost of the lowly home, is the Boy Saviour, clad in a long tunic of crimson, His eyes fixed in mysterious foreboding as He holds a bowl filled with the blood of the spotless victim from which Zacharias sprinkles the lintel with a bunch of hyssop. The Virgin Mother, her face of the most tender and pensive loveliness, stoops to gather the bitter herbs, and the youthful Forerunner kneels at the feet of the Lamb of God, humbly binding His shoe's latchet. Within the house is seen the spread table, with the wine and the unleavened bread set in order for the Social Supper.[1]

[1] F. Shields.

IV.

THE BOY CHRIST.

"Now, in the month of Adar, Jesus assembled the boys, as if He were their King; they strewed their garments upon the ground and He sat upon them. Then they put upon His head a crown wreathed of flowers, and like attendants waiting upon a king, they stood in order before Him." — *Arab Gospel of the Infancy*, XLI.

"Imagination will find its holiest work in the lighting up of the Gospels." — RUSKIN.

THE Apocryphal Gospels supply us with multitudes of legends, or rather inventions, respecting the childhood and boyhood of Christ. But to *invent* anecdotes respecting Christ is inevitably to degrade Him. The human imagination is too impure to add anything to the Holy Ideal of the Divine. Its dimmed and roughened mirror may, indeed, reflect sparks from the unemptiable fountain of the Eternal Light; but it cannot originate one colour or one gleam which does not distort or mar. There can be no more striking evidence of the veracity of the Gospels than the fact that where they have nothing to tell us, they tell us nothing. They are silent as to all that occurred in the life of Christ till He was twelve years old. After the incidents of the Infancy, they knew no facts, and therefore they recorded none. They present to us simply in barest outline the exquisite picture of a childhood increasing, by strictly human development, in wisdom, and stature, and in favour with God and man. We know only that Jesus gradually advanced in wisdom, and grew up as other children grow, only in stainless and sinless beauty, "as the flower of roses in the Spring of the year, and as lilies by the waters."

The Christians who wrote the Apocryphal Gospels were not sufficiently instructed in reverence to abstain from filling up the interspaces of the eloquent silence of the Evangelists. To them it seemed intolerable that one anecdote — the Scene in the Temple when Christ became "a Son of the Law"[1] — and one word, "the carpenter" — should be all that remains to tell us of the years when the brightness of the Divine Nature dwelt "in a tent like ours, and of the same material." They were not content to believe as the Evangelists implied by their holy reticence, that, during those long years of humblest obscurity in the peasant home of the despised village of the despised province, the Son of God lived and laboured unnoticed and unknown. They could not persuade themselves to leave untouched the "sinless years which breathed beneath the Syrian blue." They therefore indulged in endless inventions, and there is scarcely one of those inventions which does not tend to blur or obliterate the true image.

The unrecorded, uneventful boyhood and youth of the Son of Man correspond to the divine ideal of prophecy — "He shall grow up before Him as a tender plant and as a root out of a dry ground." It corresponds with the description, "He made Himself of no reputation, and took upon Him the form of a servant."

There are not many traces in Art that much attention was paid to the more worthless of the Apocryphal Haggadoth, which misinterpret and dishonour the early years of the Son of God. I remember no pictures of Him carrying the spilt water in His robe; or pulling the short board to the requisite length;[2] or moulding sparrows of clay and making them fly; or drawing webs of many colours out of one dyer's vat; or striking dead with a curse a comrade who had risen against Him.[3] In Giovanni Bellini's very

[1] I still hold the view that this was the period of Christ's life intended by the Evangelist.

[2] Unless it be Annibale Carracci's picture in the Louvre.

[3] These false incidents are all narrated in the *Gospel of the Infancy*

obscure "allegory" at Venice, there may be an allusion to His making a tree grow up and giving the fruit to His companions. But no one has painted the one pretty scene in the Arabic Gospel of the Infancy,[1] in which the boys crown Him with flowers and wait upon Him as a king, on the right hand and on the left, and make the passers-by come up and adore Him. There was a sketch of this as frontispiece to an early number of a small artistic magazine, published, I think, by the Pre-Raphaelites, and now extremely rare.

The Boy Christ. (Luini.)

Nor have there been many efforts to depict the Boy Christ. I give two. One is by Bernardino Luini, from the Ambrosiana at Milan. The features are regular and

and *Gospel of Pseudo-Matthew*. See B. Harris Cowper, *Apocr. and Gospels*, pp. 64, 67, 68, 73, 79, 203, etc.

[1] Cap. XLI.

beautiful, the eyes are large, dark, and serious. The long, straight locks are traditionally parted in the middle, the mouth is somewhat large, but full of serious sweetness, and the picture rises far above naturalism. It is a reverent

The Boy Christ. (Cesare da Sesto.)

endeavour to shadow forth the Divine that lay behind the human environment. The youthful face is translucent with a beauty which is above all ordinary beauty, because it breathes of heaven.

Far different is the singularly lovely Boy Christ by Cesare da Sesto. This charming painter was one of the best pupils of Leonardo da Vinci, but afterwards is believed to have been the friend and assistant of Raphael at Rome. The face is almost faultless in its beauty, and indeed more humanly beautiful than the Boy Christ of Luini; but it is more feminine, and, though pure and earnest, is less hauntingly divine. The Saviour is represented as a boy with long golden hair, and is dressed in a red robe with a white tunic. The picture adorns the Palazzo Tosio at Brescia.

The Boy Christ. (Guido Reni.)

Guido Reni's picture of the Boy Christ, embracing St. John,[1] has always been extremely popular; but while the youthful Baptist is beautiful, the painter falls far below Luini, and even below Cesare, in the effeminate prettiness which was the highest ideal he could form of the young Christ.

[1] National Gallery, No. 191.

V.

CHRIST AMONG THE DOCTORS.

"Better is a wise child than a foolish king." — Eccl. iv. 13.

"This Child is set for the falling and rising up of many in Israel." — Luke ii. 34.

THE subject of the young Christ in the Temple among the Doctors has naturally been a very favourite one in all ages.

The earliest certain specimen is a mosaic of the fifth century in the Church of Santa Maria Maggiore, at Rome,

although Perret (Pl. XXX.) gives one which may be of the fourth century,[1] and Martigny mentions one at St. Ambrogio, Milan, on an ancient sarcophagus. In the mosaic the Child has a cross in the nimbus over His fore-

[1] Unless it be meant for Christ (represented as a Youth) teaching the Apostles.

head. Two angels stand beside Him. Joseph holds his hand over His head, while Mary stands in an attitude of rapture. The faces of the group of Rabbis on the other side express profound astonishment.[1]

In the MS. of St. Gregory of Nazianzus (ninth century), there is a beautiful and vigorous illumination which represents this scene. On one side is the fair Child on an elevated chair, at the head of a table,[2] on which lies an open book, and at which six Rabbis are seated. On the

other side His meeting with Mary and Joseph is touchingly represented in a manner which involuntarily reminds us of the famous picture of Mr. Holman Hunt.

In many reproductions of this incident, too self-asserting a prominence, unwarranted by the circumstances, is given to the youthful Saviour. It is not the Gospels, but the Apocrypha, which represented Him as confounding and refuting the venerable Jewish teachers. The Gospels only tell us that He sat among them, probably on the ground, "both hearing and asking them questions." All

[1] Fleury, Pl. XXX.

[2] Fleury, Pl. XXXI. 1.

that heard Him were indeed "astonished at His understanding and answers," but there is not a syllable in the narrative to indicate that He entered into arguments or discussions which would have been unsuitable to the modesty of His youth, and the reverence which youth should pay to age and authority. We see plainly that His demeanour was not that of a victorious disputant, but that of the Child who went back with His parents to Nazareth, and for long years after this was subject unto them; that of Him who would neither strive nor cry, nor was His voice heard in the streets. Dürer's engraving falls into the common error. His *Jesus among the Doctors* is a mere collection of figures in different attitudes expressive of learned arrogance and a sense of superior knowledge. The deferential manner of Mary and Joseph, as they come upon the scene, forms a striking contrast to the stiff, unbending attitudes of the learned Rabbis. "Jesus sits on a raised seat and seems rather to be delivering a sermon than asking questions."[1]

The fresco at Saronno, in Santa Maria dei Miracoli, must rank among Luini's loveliest works. The figure of Christ is full of grace and sweetness.[2] He is represented stand-

[1] Thausing I. 333. Mrs. Heaton, 125.

[2] The tendency in these pictures always is to make Christ too effeminate, as in the Boccacini at Venice, in the Accademia. Gaudenzio Ferrari's *Christ among the Doctors*, at Varallo, is said to be "perhaps the purest thing produced by him, and almost Raphaelesque in its mode of narration," but I have not seen it recently. The young Christ is standing on an elevated platform, and His arguments have produced the profoundest astonishment and agitation in the minds of the doctors. At the side, Joseph and the Virgin are entering, and she is extending her arms towards Him with a look of yearning love. (See Rosini, V. 200.) There is a large picture of this scene by Pinturicchio at Spello; and by Mazzolino at Berlin; on the balustrade above he symbolically paints Old Testament Analogies, like the fight of David with Goliath. Spagnoletto's picture at Berlin is better than most of his. *The Wisdom of Jesus*, by Lairesse (of the Dutch School), is insipid. Overbeck's *Christ in the Temple* is at Berlin. Christ is a beautiful little long-haired child seated on four volumes. The Scribes are all standing. Some of them reason with Him; others consult their books.

ing up in animated discourse in a marble recess, and though He is a gentle and pensive boy, His face and attitude are full of commanding grace. The colours, as in all Luini's pictures, are tender, lovely, and most harmoniously blended. He has introduced himself at the right as one of the Rabbis, a venerable old man with white hair and beard, and an expression of mild and self-respecting dignity.

There is another picture by Luini, bearing this title, in our National Gallery, which was long attributed to Leonardo da Vinci. It is sometimes called *Christ and the Pharisees*, on the ground that the Saviour is represented as much more than twelve years old. His face is very calm and beautiful, and is in forcible contrast with the hard fanaticism expressed by the features of the white-bearded Masters of Israel. The admiration inspired by this picture is shewn by the existence of several ancient copies. "Incapable," says Burckhardt, "of representing the conquest of argument over argument, Painting here gave the victory to heavenly purity and beauty over obstinacy and vulgarity."

Mr. Holman Hunt's *Finding of Christ in the Temple* is undoubtedly one of the most profound and deeply studied religious pictures of this or of any age, and he has treated the subject in a manner which can never be surpassed. The scene is a sort of open loggia approached by steps from the Temple Court, and having at one end a gilded lattice-work. Just outside sits a lame beggar, and in the courtyard below we see the builders at work on Herod's yet unfinished temple, and catch a glimpse of a rejected corner-stone. At the back of this lecture-room a boy is scaring away the intrusive doves with a streamer of silk. In the distance is a seller of animals, and a family has taken a lamb from its ewe to offer at the consecration of a first-born child. The Rabbis, seven in number, are seated on a semi-circular divan, and are richly dressed in Eastern costume. The nearest Rabbi, blind and very aged, is

clasping to his breast a roll of the Thora, and is a type of the Jewish Law already beginning to fall dead and effete in useless formalism. One of the Levite chorister boys behind him is reverently lifting a fold of the Thora-covering, to kiss it. Three other boys, with their musical instruments, are curiously watching the meeting of the Boy Christ with His parents.

The old blind Rabbi has evidently been agitated by some answer of Jesus, and the one next to him holds a phylactery in his hand, and comforts him. The next, a man in the prime of life, has been deeply and favourably struck, and has unrolled the Law-scroll on his knee, while he gazes on Christ with earnest thought. The rest are less affected by what they have heard. One of them is about to drink a bowl of wine which an attendant is pouring out for him.

The Boy Jesus has just caught sight of Joseph and His Mother, and has risen from His seat at the feet of the doctors to salute them. The Virgin draws Him towards her with a look of intense and yearning love; but His thoughts are far away. One hand lies passive in her tender grasp, the other is tightening the buckle of His girdle, while he seems to be saying, "How is it that ye sought Me? Wist ye not that I must be in My Father's House?"[1] He is dressed in the costume which would then have been worn by a peasant boy of Galilee, except that it has a fringe. There is a natural aureole formed by the light passing through the edge of the reddish golden hair, which was a traditional element in the beauty of His ancestor David. Joseph, with his tools, stands behind the Virgin. His right hand seems to hover with infinite awe and tenderness over the shoulders of the Divine Boy.

The great aim of the painter in this picture has been to avoid all mere prettiness, all touch of effeminacy in the

[1] This, as was decisively proved by Dr. Field of Norwich, in his *Otium Norviceuse*, is undoubtedly the true rendering here — not as in the N. V., "About My Father's business."

figure of the Boy Christ. He wished to represent Him as ready, gentle, manly; full of the most heavenly thoughts, yet meek, and lowly, and desiring to be reverent to His earthly parents. He has been eminently successful. No mediæval painter — not even L. da Vinci, or Luini, or Raphael — ever painted so pure an ideal of the Boy Christ, or produced any rendering of this favourite subject so thorough or so perfect. As we look at it, we can say: —

> "This, this is *Thou!* No idle painter's dream
> Of aureoled, imaginary Christ,
> Laden with attributes that make not God,
> But Jesus, Son of Mary, lowly, wise,
> Obedient, subject unto parents, mild,
> Meek — as the meek that shall inherit earth;
> Pure — as the pure in heart that shall see God." [1]

This picture mainly represents the Finding of Christ by His Parents; but in another picture — of which an engraving appeared in the *Contemporary Review* in August, 1890, but which has not yet been publicly exhibited — Mr. Hunt has painted the scene of *Christ among the Doctors*.[2] It is a water-colour picture of a design in mosaic for the Chapel of Clifton College. This picture also is far more true to the Gospels than any mediæval or modern representation. The young Christ, of twelve years old, is not painted asserting Himself in argumentative superiority over elders white with the snows of age, who had spent their lives in the study of the Law; but He is seated, half-kneeling, at their feet on the shining floor of one of the Temple Lecture-Rooms. The Rabbis are all intended for historic personages. The one nearest the spectator is the powerful Rabboni Simeon, son of the sweet and noble Hillel, and at his feet sits his young son Gamaliel, with an Eastern tablet in his hand. Next to the Rabboni is Bava ben Butah, whom Herod had

[1] Miss Mulock.

[2] It is also reproduced in the Christmas number of the *Art Journal* for 1893.

blinded because he reproved him for the murder of Mariamne. Then comes the wise Rabbi Johanan ben Zakkai; and next to him in order are Jonathan ben Uzziel, the author of the Targum, Zadok, with a broad phylactery on his forehead, and two others.

Opposite to the young Gamaliel sit two richly dressed boys of the upper classes, intended for Joseph of Arimathea and Nicodemus. Exactly in the centre kneels the humble Lad from Nazareth in His peasant's dress — a white tunic girded with a leather girdle, which has a star-shaped buckle. He is kneeling on His striped tallith. His curling locks of reddish gold, full of light and beauty, stream down His neck and over His shoulders. His head is bent downwards, and His deep blue eyes are full of thought. His face, of the most purely noble loveliness, seems to be lighted from within by a heavenly radiance; His right hand is raised to His forehead in the Eastern gesture of attentive reverence; His left hand holds a scroll of the Prophet Isaiah, on which may be read in Hebrew the words, "He shall grow up before Him like a tender plant." The figure hardly needs the nimbus which surrounds the head. "It is not that the historic Christ is less Divine, but that all humanity is diviner because He lived and died." The picture, among its other supreme merits, is faithful, in its minutest details, to the customs and costumes of the East.

Far inferior to this, yet undoubtedly a work of genius, is the picture by Hoffmann. The Boy Christ, in His white tunic and girdle, and with a nimbus radiating from His dark locks, leans with His right arm upon a desk in earnest argument. One of the doctors, a man in the prime of life, is bending towards Him with a look of deep earnestness, resting his head on his left hand, while the right holds a scroll. An older man, with a smooth face, looks over His shoulder with astonishment, not unmingled with disapproval. On the other side are three Pharisees. One is very aged, with streaming white hair and beard,

CHRIST AMONG THE DOCTORS. *W. Holman Hunt.*

By special permission of the Artist.

who, leaning both hands on his staff, gazes at the youthful Saviour with a somewhat cynical, yet not unkindly, smile. A second is insisting on some argument, with an air of benevolent authority. His left arm is on the back of a seat, on which sits a stately Rabbi of some sixty years, who is turning the pages of a volume from which he has looked up, and he fixes on Christ his gaze of somewhat stern disapproval. His thumb rests on the text he has adduced, to which the left hand of the Boy is pointing. The picture is perfectly reverent. The face of the young Christ, with His dark earnest eyes and long dark locks, is of faultless beauty. Yet the motive of the picture is mistaken. Christ is eager and anxious, as though overmatched in the discussion. He is *contending*, as it were, with these grave and reverend Teachers of the Law, not as the Evangelist represents Him, in all the sweet modesty of youth, "both hearing them and asking them questions."

Book VII.

SCENES OF THE MINISTRY.

"True painting is only an image of God's perfection; a shadow of the pencil with which He paints; a melody, a striving after harmony." — Michael Angelo.

"Typically, the Renaissance stands for youth and youth alone, — for intellectual curiosity and energy, grasping at the whole of life as material which it hopes to mould to any shape." — Bernard Berenson, *The Venetian Painters*, New York, 1894.

I.

GENERAL SERIES.

"He who occupies himself with the things of Christ must ever dwell with Christ." — Fra Angelico.

Three of the early Pre-Raphaelite painters have given us many consecutive scenes from the Life of Christ, — Duccio, Giotto, and Fra Angelico.

Two series of paintings were devoted to this subject by Giotto, — one in the monastery church of St. Francis at Assisi, the other in the Arena Chapel at Padua.

The series at Assisi is the earlier of the two, and it illustrates the marvellous freshness, genius, and originality by which Giotto was enabled to breathe life into subjects which he was bound to treat more or less in the old traditional Byzantine manner. In the Nativity, we have the anxious and wondering Joseph, the shepherds, the angels, the women who bathe the Holy Child, the ox and ass, and every ancient element of the recognized treatment; but he has struck new lightning into the old motives. In the Adoration of the Magi, we have the Moorish attendants naïvely characterized, but the glad Mother, the gray kneeling King, blessed by the Child, who (in an often-copied incident) lays His little hand on the old man's head, the younger king taking off the rich mantle of his companion, are full of life. In "the Presentation," the yearning of the Virgin, and the earnest worship of the kneeling youth, shews what progress religious art has made. In the Flight into Egypt, angels lead the way towards the hills, and while a boy and girl are talking

as they follow the ass, the boy who alone sees the angel walks by Joseph's side.

In the Massacre of the Innocents, we have genuine pathos achieved by the simplest materials. The Christ among the Doctors is an inferior work; but the Return of the Holy Family, with the Child clinging to the robe of His supposed father, is charming. The Crucifixion introduced elements which were repeatedly copied by later artists, as, for instance, in the St. John who wrings his hands, and the woman who shews her anguish by wildly flinging back her arms.

Giotto's later and more matured series is in the Chapel of the Arena. It marks the culmination and supreme triumph of his art. The first twelve pictures are devoted to the Life of the Virgin. The thirteenth and fourteenth, which are on either side of the arch at the east end of the chapel, represent the Annunciation. Vasari praises Giotto for representing the *fear* of the Virgin at the address of the angel. If he ever treated the subject in such a manner, he departed from all the traditions of his time. The angel, on the contrary, is remarkable for his serenity, as opposed to the late reconception of the scene in which he sails into the chamber upon the wing, like a stooping falcon.[1]

In the Nativity, Giotto abandons the incident of the Bath, which was, perhaps, suspected by some on theological grounds. The Adoration of the Kings is more realistically treated than in the Chapel at Assisi. A humble roof takes the place of the stately palace, and the Virgin holds forward the little Child — here a true infant — to the old king to kiss. The Presentation is also more purely human and domestic, especially in the way in which the Child in the arms of Simeon seems yearning to get back to the outstretched arms of His Mother. The Flight into Egypt seems to have had for Giotto an idyllic charm. In the Christ among the Doctors we have that representation of

[1] Ruskin's *Giotto and His Works at Padua*, p. 72.

the joy of Mary and Joseph at the recovery of the lost Boy, which is so prominent in the great picture by Mr. Holman Hunt. In the Baptism of Christ, Giotto follows an old treatment in representing the two angels who stand on the bank and hold the garments of Jesus. In the Marriage at Cana, the painter gives the reins to his originality, and almost becomes a precursor of Veronese in the sketch of the servant who is eagerly drinking out of a tankard. In the Raising of Lazarus, Giotto emphasized the actual death, but in the aspect of the swathed figure, and in the disagreeable incident — afterwards adopted by Sebastian del Piombo — of the woman who holds her robes up to her nose with a gesture and expression of disgust, he borrows older conceptions. Martha and Mary are kneeling at Christ's feet. Much of the treatment is traditional, but it is enlivened by the two fine figures of St. Peter and St. John, by the expressiveness of the faces, and the excitement of the deeply moved youth, who, with one hand raised to his chin, peers into the face of Lazarus, and raises his arm as though in astonished appeal to Christ. This picture is one of the finest in the series. The Entry into Jerusalem shews how Giotto could paint the enthusiasm of a crowd. In the Bargain of Judas, "the two hands of the High Priest (as is so often the case with Giotto) seem to speak," and there is deep meaning in the joy of the bird-footed demon, who, unseen by the two actors, makes a malicious clutch at the apostate with his claws. Two of the venerable conspirators are discussing the matter apart, and one of them indicates the mean-looking Judas with a backward jerk of his thumb, a gesture not unfrequent in the pictures of the *trecentisti*. The same gesture occurs in the well-known Virgin and Child, with St. John and St. Francis, by Pietro Cavallini, at Assisi. The Virgin calls the Child's attention to St. Francis by a backward turn of her thumb. Of the following pictures, the Last Supper is somewhat commonplace, and in the Washing of the Feet, the Betrayal, the

Mockery, the Bearing of the Cross, there is a tendency to exaggerated realism. But the Crucifixion is a great picture. There is a "lofty moderation in the pathos. In the group under the Cross, the Virgin, fainting, yet still upright, is supported in the arms of her friends; their sorrow is not (as in the painters of the seventeenth century) for her fainting itself, but for her terrible agony."[1] The tension of the scene is a little relieved by the angels, who, like frightened birds, — Dante's *divini uccelli*, — flutter around. The soldiers at the right are engaged in earnest dispute; two of them are preventing a third from cutting to pieces the seamless robe. The Pietà is also a great picture. The sky is full of angels who express every variety of anguish. The Body is, as it were, wrapped round in love and grief; the shoulders and back lie on the knees of the Mother, who embraces her dead Son. A female saint upholds His head, another supports His right hand; the penitent Magdalene gazes upon and clasps the feet which she had once bathed with her tears and wiped with the hairs of her head. Everywhere the subjects are conceived in a higher and more intellectual manner than by many of Giotto's greatest successors.[2]

Another remarkable set of scenes from the Life of Christ — twenty-six in number — is that by Duccio (1310), in the Cathedral of Siena. They constitute twenty-six predella and other paintings, in connexion with his famous Madonna. It is needless to dwell on them separately. They shew more sweetness and refinement than those of Giotto, but less force and originality. Six of them are devoted to the childhood and youth of Christ up to the First Miracle; six to the Resurrection, and its following appearances; and six to the Life of the Virgin, as given in the *Legenda Aurea*. "If to produce individually beautiful objects were the highest purpose of painting," says

[1] Burckhardt, *Cicerone*, 35.

[2] See E. Dobbert, *Giotto* (Dohme, *Kunst u. Künstler*, I. 17–36); and Ruskin's *Giotto and His Works at Padua*.

Burckhardt, "Duccio would have excelled all the masters of the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries, not excepting Orcagna. Great must have been his joy when he found himself capable of reproducing, for his astonished contemporaries, the beauty of the human countenance and the balanced grace of lovely movements and attitudes by his own method, and not by following antique models, as did Niccolo Pisano. Yet his method is still Byzantine, and in his historical compositions, strictly speaking, he rather gave life to the traditional subjects of the school than introduced new ones. Whether he produced much or little else besides this masterpiece, he undoubtedly gave the tone to the school of his native city during a whole century." [1]

Most of Fra Angelico's series may be seen in Florence, and especially at San Marco. The heavenly achievements, and the scarcely less heavenly weaknesses, of his art, are too well known to need further notice. He is pre-eminently the painter of the pure in heart, of "the heavenlies," [2] and of the beatific vision. Intense faith and intense love, and an almost immaculate innocence, shine in his lucid and paradisaical faces. "He used his colours," it has been said, "as David used his harp, in kingly fashion, for the purposes of praise and not of science. To this gift and grace of holiness were added those of a fertile imagination, vivid invention, keen sense of loveliness in lines and colours, unwearied energy, and to all these gifts, the crowning one of quietness and peace of mind." [3]

[1] There are four scenes from the Life of Christ, by Duccio, in the possession of Mr. R. H. Benson. They are on gold backgrounds, and represent: 1. The Call of Peter and Andrew. 2. The Raising of Lazarus, in which the body is still swathed, as in the pictures of the Catacombs. 3. Christ and the Woman of Samaria, who stands with her pitcher on her head and her waterpot in her hand, in the centre. 4. The Temptation of Christ.

[2] *τὰ ἐπουράνια* Eph. i. 3.

[3] On the pictures in San Marco, see the warmly appreciative remarks of Burckhardt. — *Cicerone*, page 54.

May we pause to say a few words about this enchanting painter?

Vasari speaks of his goodness in these beautiful terms: "He avoided all worldly business; he loved the poor; he worked continually in his Art, nor would he paint other things than those which concerned the saints. He might have been rich, but he cared not for riches; nay, he was wont to say that true riches consist entirely in being content with little. He might have had command over many, and would not, saying, that to obey others was less troublesome and less liable to error. It was in his choice to have honours and dignities in his convent, and beyond it; but they were valueless to him, who affirmed that the only dignity he sought was to avoid Hell and reach Paradise; and what dignity is to be compared to that, which all ecclesiastics, and indeed all men, ought to seek, and which is found only in God, and in a virtuous life? He was most kind, and, living soberly and chastely, he freed himself from the snares of the world, frequently repeating that the painter had need of quiet; and that he who does the things of Christ should always be with Christ. That which appears to be a very wondrous and almost incredible thing is, that among his brethren he was never seen in anger; and it was his wont when he admonished his friends, to do so with a sweet and smiling gentleness." He goes on to tell us that, when his Prior gave him leave, he was always ready to paint for any one who desired his works; that he never took up his brush without a previous prayer; that he never painted a crucifix without bathing his own cheeks with tears; and that he never would take any money for his works. He adds one anecdote which beautifully illustrates Angelico's simplicity: One day Pope Nicholas V. invited him to dinner, but he refused to eat meat because he had not obtained the leave of his Prior, "forgetting, in his unquestioning obedience, the authority of the Pope to release him from that of his ecclesiastic superior."

Angelico could paint angels as no other man has been able to paint them, because he was one of those few men who on earth had lived in heaven. He paints them almost shadowless, in robes of the purest, tenderest, and most vernal colourings, their heads surrounded by golden nimbi, enriched with flower-like touches, and their radiant wings enamelled with all the colours of the rainbow. He conceives them, as Dante conceives them, as emanations of living light. Often in painting them he must have thought of Dante's lines in the *Purgatorio*: —

> "Coming forth, descending from on high
> I saw two angels, each with sword of fire
> Truncated flames, of forms that points deny.
> Verdant as new-born leaflets their attire
> Was seen, while they with green wings onward drove,
> Beaten and blown in many a breezy spire."

Their faces, soft, and ethereally beautiful, are delicate with rose and gold, as of —

> "Some bright creatures of the element
> Who in the colours of the rainbow live
> And play in the plighted clouds."

They were the faces which he saw in his holy visions, and which — regarding them as revelations — he never would retouch when once they had been sketched in. It would be idle in me to attempt to describe them when I can enrich this page with the splendid sentences of Mr. Ruskin. He describes "the angel-choirs of Angelico, with the flames on their white foreheads, waving brighter as they move, and the sparkles streaming from their purple wings, like the glitter of many suns upon a sounding sea, listening, in the pauses of alternate song, for the prolonging of the trumpet-blast and the answering of psaltery and cymbal, throughout the endless deep, and from all the star shores of heaven." Cardinal Newman said of angels, that "every breath of air, every ray of light and heat, every beautiful prospect is, as it were, the skirts of their

garments, the waving of the robes of those whose faces see God." This was the constant thought of Fra Angelico. The cloister walk of Florence was to him "no penitential solitude, but a possessed land of tender blessing, guarded from the entrance of all but holiest sorrow. The little cell was one of the houses of heaven prepared for him by his Master. Was not the Val d'Arno, with its olive woods in white blossom, paradise enough for a poor monk? or could Christ be indeed in heaven more than here? Was He not always with him? Under every cypress avenue the angels walked. He had seen their white robes, whiter than the dawn, at his bedside, as he awoke at early summer. They had sung with him, one on each side, when his voice failed for joy at sweet vesper and matin time; his eyes were blinded by their wings in the sunset, when it sank behind the hills of Luni."

"The period of the fourteenth and earlier years of the fifteenth century is one, comparatively speaking, of repose and tranquillity," says Lord Lindsay. "The storm sleeps, and the winds are still. There is in truth a holy purity, an innocent naïveté, a childlike grace and simplicity, a fearlessness, an utter freedom from affectation, a yearning after all things truthful, lovely, and of good report in the productions of this early time, which invest them with a charm peculiar of its kind, and which few even of the most perfect works of the maturer era can boast."[1]

Later schools, under the influence of Leonardo da Vinci, of Michael Angelo, and of Raphael, gained in anatomical correctness and in technical qualities, but they utterly lost the faultless workmanship, the serenity, the avoidance of tumult, violence, and pain, which are characteristic of the earlier schools. Their danger was the substitution of the flesh for the spirit, and the choice of evil in all its forms — sadness, vice, sensuality, pride and anguish — as fit themes for the self-display of a scientific art.[2]

[1] *Christian Art,* II. 161.

[2] These facts have been illustrated by Mr. Ruskin in his lecture on Michael Angelo and Tintoret.

There are not many complete series of scenes from the Life of Christ, by the painters of the Renaissance. Francia, however, has something of the kind in the Accademia of Florence. One long and narrow picture represents at one end the Nativity, and at the other, the Crucifixion. In his *Pietà* two angels bear the dead Christ, and each face is full of the lovely intensity of sincere feeling which characterizes the master. In one of his Madonnas, the Virgin and Child are seated between a rapturous Sebastian and an armed St. George, his helmet at his feet, his splintered lance in his hand. Above them, three angels, crowned with oleanders and carnations, are scattering flowers.

Every visitor to Venice knows the colossal series of scenes from the Life of Christ, which are the most wonderful proof of the genius of Tintoret in the Scuola di San Rocco. Of more than one of these I have spoken separately. The Annunciation and the Crucifixion are perhaps the most striking.

There is a set of nine pictures from the Life of Christ by Holbein.

No painter of this or the last century has, I believe, ever produced such series as these; but Mr. Holman Hunt has devoted many years of his life to the setting forth of great events in the Life of the Saviour. Of these I have spoken under the several heads.

II.

SEPARATE INCIDENTS OF THE MINISTRY.

"And so the Word had flesh and wrought
With human hands the creed of creeds,
In loveliness of perfect deeds,
More strong than all poetic thought."

—TENNYSON.

ALTHOUGH some scenes of Christ's Ministry have been frequently treated in Art, yet the number of pictures which deal with His three and a half years of public teaching and preaching in Judæa, Samaria, and Galilee is extremely small in comparison with those which represent what may be called the more personal and individual elements of His life on earth.[1] The great mediæval masters, whether German or Italian, far more rarely chose for their subjects the Parables, the Miracles, or the great sermons of Christ, than they chose the events of His earliest years and of His latest days.[2]

I shall endeavour in this chapter to give specimens of the earliest, or one of the earliest, representations of the

[1] Readers who wish to be referred to other pictures in the events of the Ministry, which are not mentioned here, may find some by Gaudenzio Ferrari, Bassano, Annibale Carracci, Poussin, etc., in the *Illustrated New Testament*, published by Mr. Longman in 1883. But the pictures of the sixteenth century and later painters, being technical rather than religious, have but little interest in connexion with my present subject.

[2] There is a series in the Sistine Chapel on the right wall. 1. The Baptism (Perugino). 2. The Temptation (Botticelli). 3. The calling of Peter and Andrew (Ghirlandajo). 4. The Sermon on the Mount (Rosselli). 5. The Investiture of Peter (Perugino). 6. The Last Supper (Rosselli).

main events of these years which are recorded in the Gospels. These will furnish us with the chief traditional elements of treatment, which frequently remained undisturbed for centuries. As regards some of the scenes, these early pictures will therefore suffice, and, indeed, lack of space, as well as limitation of materials, render it impossible to enter so fully into this part of the subject.

After the first visit to the Temple, the Gospels do not furnish a single detail of the Life of Christ until the Baptism. The question of the indignant Nazarene, "Is not this the carpenter?" and the few precious words of St. Luke, which tell us that He lived at Nazareth with His parents, and was subject unto them, and "grew in wisdom and stature and favour with God and men," furnish all that we really know.[1]

THE BAPTISM.

"A Johanne in Jordane,
Christus baptisatus est
Unde lotus mundus totus
Et purificatus est."

—PRUDENTIUS.

The veil of silence is first lifted for us when Jesus was "about thirty years of age," and went to be baptized of John in the Jordan.

In the Catacombs during the first four centuries, the Baptism was, as a rule, indicated by such distant symbols as Noah in the Ark and the passage of the Red Sea. It is not till the fifth century that we find the first actual representation on a sarcophagus in the Lateran, next to

[1] Mark vi. 3; Luke ii. 51, 52.

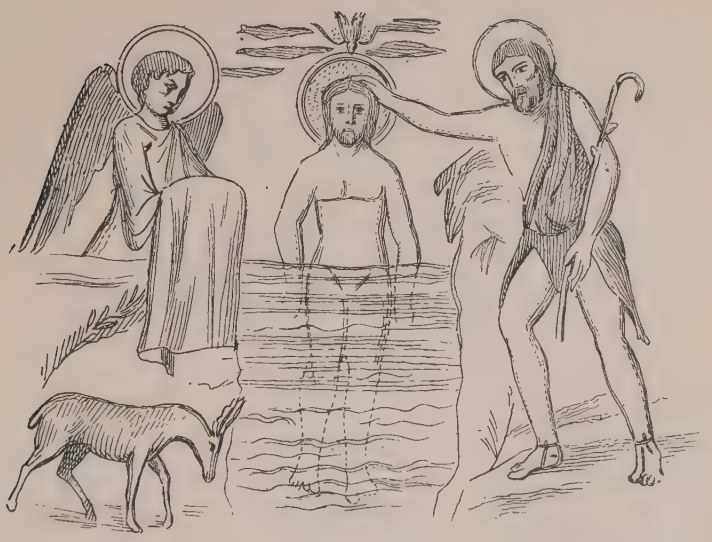
an Adoration of the Shepherds.[1] The Jordan is represented by a wavy line at the right. The Baptist stands on the rocky bank and pours water on the head of the Saviour from a patera.

In the sixth century we find the same treatment varied only in the accessories. In the Baptistery of the Cathedral at Ravenna, the scene is represented in a medallion at the

[1] Aringhi, II. 355; Fleury, XXXII., Fig. 3.

top of the cupola.[1] The rocks on which St. John stands are brightened with flowers, and he holds in his left hand a jewelled cross which Hemans regards as a later addition. Over the patera is a descending dove. The heads both of Christ and of the Baptist are surrounded by the nimbus, and on the right, holding a towel in his hands, stands a personification of the Jordan, a bearded river-god, with his head crowned by a wreath of water-plants.

One more illustration may be given from a seventh-century fresco in the Catacomb of St. Pontianus. Here St. John stands on the left river-bank and the towel is



held by an angel on the right bank.[2] A stag is bending down to quench his thirst at the water-brooks, in reference to Psalm xlii. 1.

The mediæval treatment of the scene is illustrated by the noble picture of Andrea Verrocchio in the Accademia di Belle Arti at Venice. It was painted for the monks of

[1] Fleury, XXXII., Fig. 4 ; Lavarthe, IV. 176.
[2] Fleury, XXXIII. 1.

Vallombrosa. The grand figure of the Christ, girt round the loins with a striped *abbeyeh*, stands only ankle-deep in a pure rill of the Jordan, which is fed by a spring gushing out of the living rock. His hands are folded, palm to palm, in

The Baptism. (Verrocchio.)

earnest prayer. On His left, with one foot in the water, stands the stern, haggard, and awestruck Baptist, in his robe of camel's hair. In his left hand he holds a cross and a scroll inscribed with the words, *Ecce Agnus Dei.*

His right hand empties the patera above the cruciform nimbus, which surrounds the long, dark, curling locks of the Saviour, over which, beneath two outspread hands and streaming rays of light, descends the radiant dove. On the right of Christ, two beautiful angels kneel on the rocks underneath a palm-tree, in wonder and adoration. The nearer one, holding the towel, is traditionally assigned to Leonardo da Vinci, who was then only a youth of seventeen in the studio of Verrocchio. The extreme beauty and nobleness of form in this figure, the long and lustrous curls which flow under his nimbus, the innocent glory of his face, the lustre of his eyes, as well as the masterly folds of the drapery and the painting of the rich jewels which form the embroidery of his tunic, make this one of the most charming figures which Leonardo ever painted. The still and solemn landscape, the grand figures, the noble feeling of the whole picture, testify to Verrocchio's greatness; but tradition tells us that, thinking himself to have been surpassed by the boy Leonardo, he would thenceforth paint no more.[1]

Piero dei Franceschi.

As one more specimen of a later mode of treatment, I add a sketch of the picture by Piero dei Franceschi,[2] in the National Gallery.

[1] See Crowe and Cavalcaselle, II. 407–409. Richter, *Leonardo*, pp. 6, 7. There is an unsatisfactory *Baptism* by Paris Bordone in the Brera.

[2] Erroneously called Piero della Francesca, as though named from his mother. His contemporary, Fra Luca Pacioli, calls him Petrus de

It is interesting, as his pictures always are. Christ stands under a pomegranate tree, ankle-deep in the water. Three fair, rose-crowned angels watch the scene. In the distance is the very life-like figure of a man who has been baptized, and is drawing his shirt over his head.[1]

THE TEMPTATION.

"Ideo tentatus est Christus ne vincatur a Tentatore Christianus." — *Aug. in Ps.* ix.

The Temptation of Jesus in the wilderness has never been a common theme of Art. It has been felt to be too solemn, too subjective. Painters like Raphael and Albrecht Dürer instinctively avoided it. No effort to shadow it forth is found in early Christian monuments, and it does not seem to have been attempted till the Middle Ages. The age-long reserve of Christian artists was first broken by the illuminators of missals and manuscripts, and in their pages we find the first approaches to natural, as opposed to purely symbolic, treatment. They permitted themselves greater freedom, because their illuminations were in books, and were only seen by monks and scholars.

The earliest known *Temptation of Christ* is found in the celebrated manuscript of the works of St. Gregory of Nazianzus in the ninth century.[2] It represents Christ standing on the pinnacle of the temple in a violet robe (which is the favourite colour of early tradition for Christ's vesture).[3] In His left hand He holds a roll; with His right He warns the Devil, who is represented as a black

Franciscis. He is sometimes called Pietro da Borgo San Sepolcro, and di Benedetto.

[1] There is another *Baptism* in the National Gallery by some pupil in the school of Taddeo Gaddi (No. 579), but it is chiefly remarkable for its careful symmetry. It was painted in 1387.

[2] Paris. *Bibliothèque Nationale.* MS. 510.

[3] Fleury, XXXVI., Fig. 1.

and winged youth in a light green cincture. Satan treads with one foot on the air, and with the other seems to indicate the words, "cast Thyself down." The head of Christ is surrounded by a nimbus, and He bends on the Evil Spirit a look of the calmest majesty.

There is a Temptation by Duccio (New Gallery, 1894), in which Satan is shewing to Christ "all the kingdoms of the world," represented by towers and cities. There are two angels at the right. The first Temptation is vigorously represented by Lucas van Leyden in his plates for the *New Testament*.[1] The sovereign tact of the great Renaissance painters kept them from handling an impossible subject.

There is a Temptation by Perugino in the Vatican, by Botticelli in the Sistine Chapel, and by Tintoret in the Scuola di San Rocco. Tintoret makes the Tempter a beautiful angel, with an evil face. "The picture owes great part of its effect to the lustre of the jewels in the armlet of this evil angel and to the beautiful colour of his wings. The armlet is seen by reflected light, its

[1] Mrs. Jameson gives a sketch of this curious picture, in which Satan is an old bearded man, whose cowl resembles a fool's cap, and whose clawed hoof is seen under his long robe. In St. Mark's, at Venice, the Tempter is a black monster, with tail and claws and horns.

stones shining by inward lustre, this occult fire being the only hint given of the real character of the Tempter. There is a peculiar subtlety in this telling of the story by so slight a circumstance as the glare of the jewels in the darkness."[1]

Of modern pictures, the best known is that by Ary Scheffer, which does not, however, introduce any new or striking element.

It is curious that the conclusion of the Temptation, "And, behold, angels came and ministered unto Him," is left to be handled by such inferior masters as Vasari, Lodovico Carracci, and Le Brun.

THE SERMON ON THE MOUNT.

This scene has never been made the subject of any great and specially memorable picture, although Claude gives that name to one of his landscapes. It has been attempted once or twice — but never successfully, or with any real suggestiveness — in modern times.

THE MIRACLES.

The Miracles of Christ are but rarely the theme of Art. In attempting to paint them, the picture is often made less suitable for purposes of devotion, because the attention is fixed on a single act, and may easily be distracted from the glory of the central figure by the multitude of accessories.

Some, however, of the Miracles have been much more frequently represented than others. Among these is that of turning water into wine in the marriage which Christ "beautified with His presence and the first miracle which He wrought in Cana of Galilee."

One of the earliest sketches of the scene is found on

[1] *Stones of Venice*, III. 41.

the grand sarcophagus at the Lateran.[1] The youthful Christ is holding up in His left hand the ends of His pallium. In His right is a rod with which He is touching the central waterpot of stone. The extreme simplicity

of the symbolism contrasts in a very striking way with the lavish splendour of such pictures as that by Paolo Veronese.[2] His paintings are full of charm, but even when

[1] Fleury, XXXVII., Fig. 2. Other instances are given by Aringhi.

[2] He painted the Miracle at least four times on huge canvases. The one at Dresden is the largest, and contains 130 figures. At the right of Christ he has placed Francis I., Charles V., the Sultan Solyman II., and Queen Mary Tudor. The bride is a portrait of Eleanor of Austria, Queen of France, behind whom stands her court-jester. The four musicians are portraits of Titian, Tintoret, Bassano, and Paolo himself. Such a picture hardly belongs to the region of religious Art.

nominally religious, really belong to the class of "novel-pictures." He represents his *Marriage at Cana* in a blaze of worldly pomp. The Venetian sumptuosity of imagination made him revel in rich colours, magnificent palaces, architectural perspective, glowing lights, and jewelled robes. He was in his way a sincerely religious man; but his religion was that of Venice in the latter part of the sixteenth century (1588), and he thought that the nominally sacred character of his subject sufficiently consecrated everything which he cared to introduce into the canvas. Even when he worked for churches and cloisters, he fancied that the theme itself sanctified every superb extravagance of his imagination. He painted mainly to please himself, and to please his patrons. With the strong naturalistic tendencies which he had imbibed, and the prevailing conventionalism of the religious feeling of his day, he expressed his views with the utmost naïveté when he was called to account by the Holy Inquisition.[1] They were alarmed and offended by the fact that he had introduced into his picture of *Christ at the Feast of the House of Levi*, at Venice, one servant slyly drinking wine as he

[1] The report of Veronese's trial was found by M. Armand Basquet in the Venetian archives. In answer to the questions of the Inquisition about his *Last Supper*, he says that "he works according to the fashion of *painters and fools*, and has found no other way to express the fact that the master of the house was rich and lived splendidly," than by introducing Germans with halberds, a buffoon with a parrot on his wrist, a servant who has met with an accident which has set his nose bleeding, etc. "I believe, to tell the truth, that, at that Supper there were only Christ and the Apostles, but *when in a picture there is a space left, I fill it with figures of my invention.*"

Q. "But does it seem decent to you, in the Last Supper of our Lord, to represent buffoons, drunken Germans, dwarfs, and other stupidities? Do you not know that in Germany and other countries infested by heresies, this is done to ridicule the holy things of the Church?"

Veronese appeals to the nudities of Michael Angelo's *Last Judgment*.

Q. "But do you think that that was proper or decent?"

"My very illustrious Lords," replied the painter, "I had not taken such matters into consideration. I was far from imagining such irregularities. *I paint with such study as is natural to me, and as my mind can comprehend.*"

descends the stairs to the right, and a negro dressed in scarlet teasing a parrot, as well as "fools, drunken Germans, dwarfs, and other follies." He appealed to Michael Angelo's paintings in the Sistine Chapel, and answered, in general with charming simplicity, that he did not see anything unbecoming in thus indulging his fancy in mere details. He was ordered to amend his picture within three months at his own expense, but it is very doubtful whether he ever did so. He might have defended himself effectually by the example of Giotto, who boldly introduced *genre* elements when he represents the "governor of the feast" as "a fat gourmand, drinking off a goblet of wine with a mixture of wonder and enjoyment."

But whatever may be the drawbacks of the colossal canvases of Paolo Veronese regarded as sacred Art, they have an unquestionably human beauty of festal cheerfulness and magnificence. He infused into a sunken period of Art a bright vitality and a poetic feeling which were, indeed, addressed more to the senses than to the soul, "though even the most superficial of his innumerable works have a breadth of grace and a plenitude of life, which, at that time, had entirely departed from other schools." [1]

Tintoretto also painted *The Marriage of Cana* on a large scale, and in a genre manner in the Church of the Salute at Venice. His treatment differs from that of Veronese, because the scene is rightly made domestic, rather than princely, and because the actual facts of the miracle are at least put in the forefront.[2]

THE MIRACULOUS DRAUGHT OF FISHES.

The earliest representations of the Call of the Apostles and the Miraculous Draught of Fishes seem to be on an ancient ivory.[3]

[1] See Kugler, II. 464.

[2] There is a smaller copy in the Uffizi at Florence.

[3] Mamachi, *Antiq. Christianae*, 1755.

The subject is not found in the Catacombs, but is represented in that noble treasure-house of early Christian Art, the sixth-century mosaics of the Church of St. Apollinaris at Ravenna. Christ, marked by His cruciform nimbus, and clad in a violet robe, stands on the shore and

blesses St. Peter and St. Andrew in their boat. Behind Him is another figure. St. Peter in his fisher's coat is dragging in the net. A typical dolphin is swimming in the waves below.[1]

Of modern treatments of the scene, the reader will at once recall the famous cartoon of Raphael. It is perhaps the most pleasing of all his cartoons. Christ sits in the stern of the boat, which is sinking almost to its gunwale with the load of fish — many of them (we observe) of kinds which could not possibly have existed in the lake. St. Peter is on his knees in the midst of the draught, and St. Andrew stands with arms outspread in astonishment. On the other boat Zebedee and his two sons are toiling at the nets. Three large cranes are enjoying their share of

[1] Fleury, XI. 1.

the fish on the shore of the lake, quite heedless of all the stir. They are the first objects which attract the eye. They have great pictorial value, but Mr. Watkiss Lloyd conjectures that Raphael introduced them symbolically. He supposes that the crane, like the stork, is an emblem of filial affection, and that their introduction symbolizes the fact that James and John are about to leave their father.[1]

MIRACLES OF HEALING.

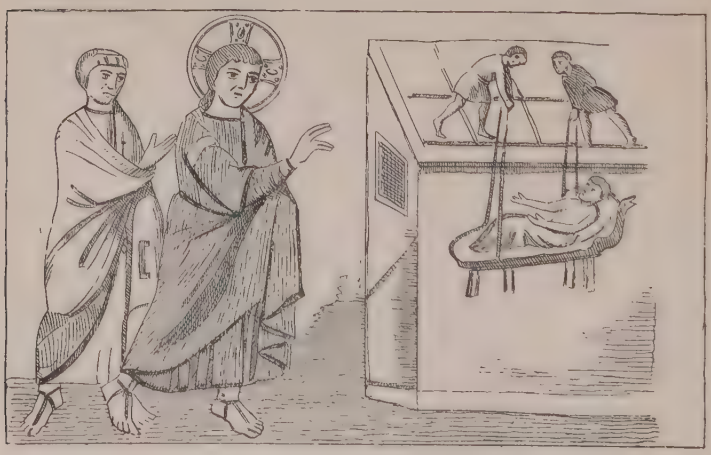
No paintings of Christ's work, as "the Good Physician," seem to occur before the fifth and sixth centuries. I furnish two of the most ancient attempts to indicate the healing of the demoniac. The first is from a fifth-century ivory which forms the cover of an Evangeliarium in the library of Ravenna. The beardless Christ holds His cross and blesses a poor demoniac, who, in accordance with the old simple symbolism, is of smaller size. The sufferer is still fettered, and manacled, and stands in a distorted attitude. The evil spirit, with a wild gesture of horror, is issuing from his head.[2]

[1] *Christianity in the Cartoons of Raphael*, pp. 30–36. He adduces one of the emblems on the *Emblemata Divini Amoris*, in which the soul renouncing earthly affections is indicated by a figure waving away a Stork, which carries its young on its back.

[2] Fleury, XLII. 3.

The other is an almost unique symbol of the miracle at Gadara, in the Church of St. Apollinaris. The healed

demoniac kneels beside his cavern-tomb, at the feet of Christ, in a posture of adoring gratitude. The youthful



Christ, marked as usual by His violet robe and crossed nimbus, stretches His hand toward the sufferer. Behind

Him an Apostle in a white robe, and without a nimbus, uplifts his open palm in the conventional gesture of admiration. On the other side, three of the swine are rushing to their doom.[1]

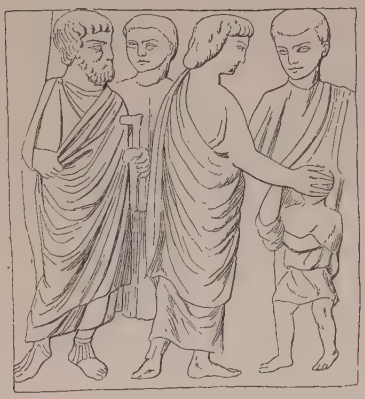
The healing of the paralytic who was let down through the roof in his bed, is also found in St. Apollinaris. It aims at nothing but to recall the memory of the scene. It is an interesting and not unfrequent detail that the back of the paralytic's couch is formed by dolphins, the traditional emblems of deliverance which Christian Art borrowed from heathen mythology.[2]

This detail is found again in a sculpture of the raising of the daughter of Jairus. The healing of the woman with the issue is represented on a fine fourth-century sarcophagus now in the Museum at Arles.[3]

The earliest picture of the healings of the lame and blind is found in an illumination in the famous Syriac Bible at Florence, which is of the sixth century. Its very simplicity renders it effective in telling its intended tale. Six miracles of opening the eyes of the blind are narrated in the Gospels. One other specimen, from a

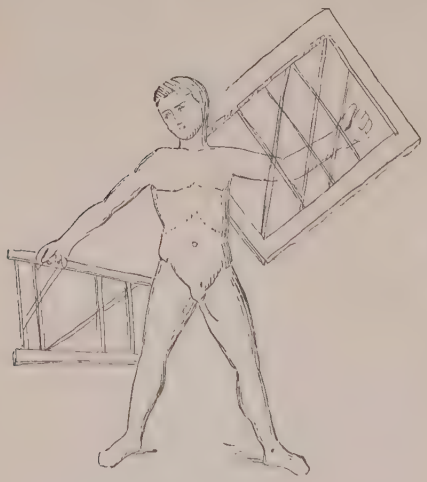
[1] Fleury, XLII. 1. [2] Id. XLIII. 1. [3] Id. XLIV. 1.

fourth-century sarcophagus, now in the Lateran, may suffice to shew the general mode of treatment.[1]



The healing of the impotent man at the Pool of Bethesda was, for some reason, an exception to the rule that the miracles are rarely represented in the Catacombs. It occurs not unfrequently.[2]

The first, which represents the impotent man carrying his bed, is from the Catacomb of St. Agnes.[3] The second is from the Catacomb of St. Callistus.[4] Both are of the third century. The third is from a sar-



[1] Fleury, II. lix., Fig. 1.

[2] The chef d'œuvre of Erasmus Quellynn is the *Pool of Bethesda*, and there is a well-known modern picture of the scene by Edwin Long. The subject was sometimes required for hospitals, and was treated by L. Carracci, N. Poussin, and Murillo.

[3] Fleury, LI. 2; Perret, II. 34.

[4] Fleury, LI. 2, Fig. 3.

cophagus now in the Lateran, which was brought from the Vatican cemetery. It represents the whole scene. In the lower part the sufferer holds his hand to his head in sign of anguish, and as though to implore mercy, while other sufferers pray and plead on either side of Him. A wavy line, symbolizing the pool, separates the lower from the upper compartment, in which the diminutive figure of the healed paralytic is carrying away his bed amid the admiring gestures of the other sick.[1]

Miracles of Healing.

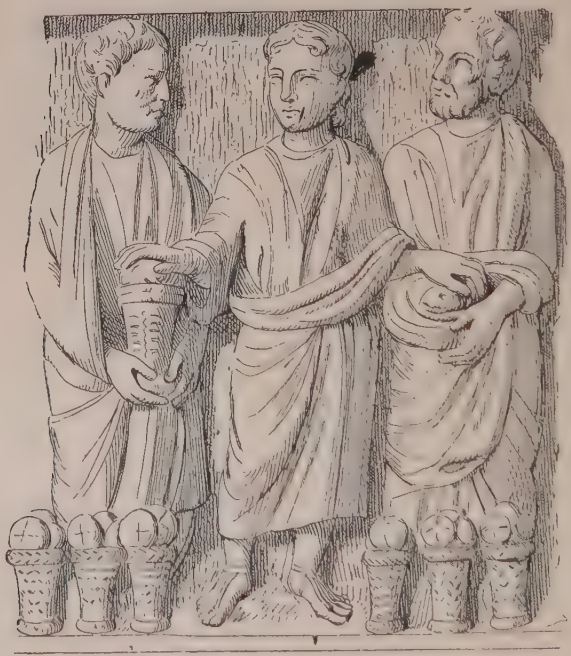
Christ's mercy to the Syrophœnician woman seems to have been only treated by Annibale Carracci, who represents the woman as pointing to a dog in mute appeal.

Rembrandt has a large etching of Christ healing the sick, and it is the subject of an interesting picture in the National Gallery by Benjamin West, painted for the Quaker Hospital at Philadelphia. It is a curious circumstance that many of the pictures of this subject are by the seventeenth-century painters, such as Nicolas Poussin and the Carraccis. Nicolas Poussin's picture of Christ healing the blind man of Jericho is in the Louvre. There is another of the same subject by Lodovico Carracci, now in London.[2] The painting of Christ making the dumb to sing, by a deaf and dumb painter in the Margate Institution, is interesting from its locality and its origin.

[1] Fleury, LI. 4.

[2] Given in outline by Rosini, VI. 7.

The multiplication of the loaves was another favourite subject from its eucharistic character, and because it was suitable for monastic refectories. Of the numerous representations, I choose one of the third century from the great sarcophagus of the Lateran.[1] All the subsequent sketches and sculptures shew, as Monsieur Fleury says, a marked continuity of tradition. One of the disciples holds the basket of bread, and the other, the plate of fish, on which Christ's hand rests in benediction. At His feet are the six large baskets (*σπυρίδες*, Vulgate *sportae*).



When the other miracle of feeding the multitude is intended, there are five smaller baskets (*κόφινοι, cophini*). The symbolic simplicity of these representations has more charm than is derivable from the few rare attempts at

[1] Fleury, Vol. II., p. lvi., Fig. 3.

realistic elaborations. No painter, in representing the two miracles, seems to have noticed that the former miracle, which was performed on the little plain of El Buttauf, to the north of the Sea of Galilee, was in the summer, and the latter, west of the Sea of Galilee, in the autumn. In the former miracle the people are bidden to sit down on the green grass, and their bright-coloured Eastern robes, as they sat in ranks (*πρασιαὶ πρασιαὶ*, literally "by garden-beds"), reminded St. Peter — as we see in the narrative of his disciple St. Mark — of beds of flowers.[1]

This is one of those vivid touches which might well have attracted the notice of painters, and given an accurate and beautiful detail to their designs. In the latter miracle there would be none of the green grass which St. Mark mentions in his Gospel (vi. 39). In Palestine it is scorched up by the heat of summer, and the people would be forced to sit on the bare and dusty ground.

The oldest known representation of Christ walking on the sea is Giotto's mosaic in the portico of St. Peter's at Rome (1298). Perhaps the best known modern picture of the event is that by C. R. Leslie.

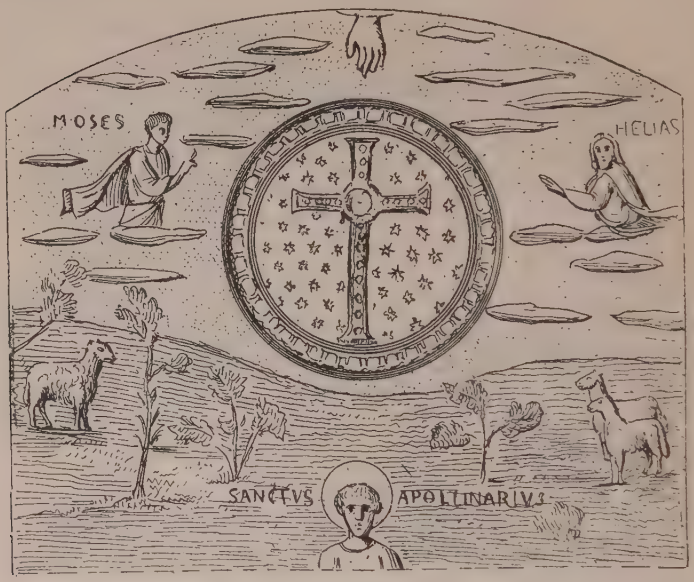
THE TRANSFIGURATION.

To paint the Transfiguration far exceeded the simple powers of the early centuries. Perhaps the earliest known attempt to indicate the scene, is in the Church of St. Apollinaris in Classe, near Ravenna. It is an apsidal mosaic of the sixth century. The only figures introduced, and those are quite diminutive, are half-lengths of Moses and Elias in the clouds.[2] A hand coming from heaven indicates the blessing of the Father. The transfigured Christ is shadowed forth by *a jewelled cross* in the centre of a circle crowded with stars. The three Apostles are sym-

[1] Mark vi. 40. In the previous verse it is *συμπόσια, συμπόσια.* Theophylact defines *πρασιαὶ* as *τὰ ἐν τοῖς κήποις διάφορα κόμματα.*

[2] Fleury, LXIII. 2.

bolized by three sheep on the green mountain-top. The mosaic admirably illustrates the power of symbolism.



The Transfiguration.

But little later in date than this is a neglected mosaic on the vault of the Church of St. Catherine's monastery

The Transfiguration.

on Mount Sinai, which is also simple and full of force.[1] Christ stands in a sort of *mandorla*, a little above the earth. Moses and Elias stand on the same level as the apostles. James and John are kneeling on either side, with uplifted hands of awe. Peter has prostrated himself on the ground and hides his face from the exceeding glory.

The Transfiguration. (Fra Angelico.)

When we look at such simple early representations, we see at a glance that the artists desired only to tell their

[1] Fleury, LXIII., Fig. 1.

tale aright. They thought neither of themselves nor of their own skill, but simply and solely of their sacred theme. The same may be said of Fra Angelico's picture in San Marco. There the majestic figure of Jesus — majestic in spite of the tender sadness of His expression — stands with arms outstretched as on the cross; Moses and Elias are on either side, and underneath them St. Dominic and St. Clara. Below the actual summit kneels the youthful St. John in prayer. St. Peter and St. James are also on their knees, and shade their eyes from the glorified visage and the glistering garments, white as snow and more lustrous than any fuller on earth could whiten them.

How different is the *Transfiguration* by Raphael at Rome! It was his last work (1510), finished by Giulio Romano. It hung over his bier when he passed away, worn out with his immense labours at the age of thirty-seven, and all Rome wept at his loss. No one who sees this picture can fail to be struck with the contrast between the peace on the summit of Tabor, and the tumult below, where the agonized father is vainly asking help for his convulsed demoniac boy.[1] And yet the picture does not satisfy us. It is meant to be devotional, and not a mere memorial transcript of the fact. Yet we lose the thought of the Transfigured Christ in admiration for the passion, the learning, the marvellous skill of the painter, and there is nothing to impress or overcome us in what Mr. Ruskin calls "the kicking gracefulness" of the Lawgiver and the Old Testament forerunner.[2] In some way, perhaps inde-

[1] Mr. W. Watkiss Lloyd points out that the disciple with the book in front is sitting *by the edge of a pool,* in which his foot is reflected, and is seated on logs of wood; with distinct reference, as he thinks, to the demon casting the boy often into the water and the fire. — *Christ in the Cartoons,* p. 283.

[2] "Raphael, himself, after profoundly studying the arabesques of Pompeii and of the palace of the Cæsars, beguiled the tedium, and illustrated the spirituality of the converse of Moses and Elias with Christ concerning His decease, which He should accomplish at Jerusalem, by

finable, yet none the less distinctly felt, the picture seems to lack the deep sincerity of the older painters, and even of the ancient symbolism. Their "modesty of fearful duty" moves us more than all this splendour of pictorial eloquence.[1] And yet we can imagine how and why men sobbed as they looked from the beautiful dead face of the painter to his great unfinished work.

The *Transfiguration* of L. Carracci at Bologna is chiefly noticeable for its exaggeration. The Apostles are painted in convulsive postures, and even the Saviour is represented in an attitude of violent gesticulation.

THE RAISING OF LAZARUS.

The Raising of Lazarus, as the type and pledge of the Resurrection of the Body, was perhaps the favourite illustration in the Catacombs. We have already furnished some specimens of the almost unvarying type. One of the earliest, in the Catacomb of St. Prætextatus, presents the simplest form of the scene, and it varies but little in later ages.[2] The reader may perhaps look with curiosity at the accompanying relief of the eleventh century, in the Byzantine style, now in Chichester Cathedral.[3]

In mediæval pictures, Mary of Bethany is constantly represented with long, dishevelled hair, because she is confused with the woman who was a sinner.

placing them above the Mount of Transfiguration, in the attitudes of two humming-birds on the top of a honeysuckle. But the best of these ornamental arrangements were insufficient to sustain the vivacity, while they conclusively undermined the sincerity, of the Christian faith, and the real consequences of the acceptance of this kind (Roman bath and sarcophagus kind) of religious idealism, were instant and manifold." — *On the Old Road*, I. 329. See *Modern Painters*, III. 55.

[1] The figures of St. Julian and St. Laurence adoring, at the left, were introduced at the request of Giulio de' Medici, in honour of his uncles, Giuliamo and Lorenzo.

[2] Fleury, LXVI. 1.

[3] The treatment of the subject by Tintoret, in San Rocco, is unsatisfactory. See, however, *Stones of Venice*, III. 339.

The most ambitious delineation of this scene in mediæval Art is the large picture by Sebastian del Piombo in our National Gallery (A.D. 1519). Sebastian Luciani, called "Del Piombo," because in 1531 Clement VII. made him keeper of the Leaden Seal, was employed to finish

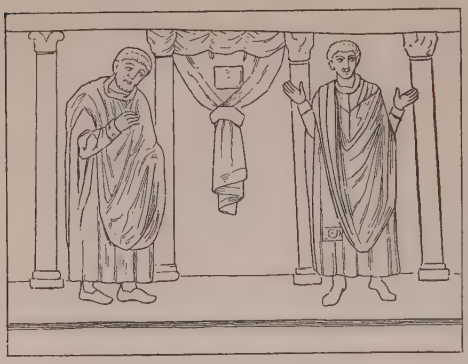
some of the designs of Michael Angelo, who thought that he could make him a successful rival to Raphael. He began as a pupil of Bellini, but afterwards imitated Giorgione. This huge — but hardly great — picture was painted for Cardinal Giulio de' Medici, in a sort of emulous competition with Raphael's *Transfiguration*. There can be little doubt that Michael Angelo rendered to Sebastian material assistance in the composition and design. Straining effort is manifest throughout, and a total lack of de-

votional spontaneity. The painter is thinking exclusively of the effectiveness of his picture, not of the miracle of Christ's mercy. Jesus, with one hand uplifted to heaven, and the other pointing to Lazarus, has just said, "Loose him and let him go." Behind him St. John is arguing with incredulous Pharisees. The face of Lazarus is still deeply overshadowed by the shroud, but his eye is fixed on Christ. Behind him is Martha, half horrified by what she sees, and other women who hold their noses in allusion to, "Lord, by this time he hath seen corruption." This, however, is, at this stage of the miracle, a needless and highly offensive anachronism, borrowed unwisely from earlier painters like Duccio and Giotto, and even (being traditional) Fra Angelico. Three men are removing the heavy stone of the sepulchre. Mary is at the feet of Jesus. The painting is the work of an able artist, but does not add a single element of thought or devotion to the mind of the spectator. Nor could any truly great or moving work of Art spring out of mean and feverish competition. It is noteworthy that many of the greatest masters, such as Raphael, Fra Bartolommeo, and Titian, avoided this subject. It is still more astonishing that so very few painters, and these only of later and inferior schools, like the Carraccis, have dealt with the Raising of the Daughter of Jairus, or of the Son of the Widow of Nain.

THE PARABLES.

Pictures from the Parables do not properly belong to the Life of Christ. In early Art they are extremely rare, nor are they common in mediæval or modern galleries. They chiefly occur in the German and Venetian schools, especially in the prolific school of Bassano. The appended mosaic of *The Pharisee and the Publican*, full of force and expressiveness, though the elements of it are so simple, is from the Church of St. Apollinaris Nuovo at Ravenna.

The Parable of the Sower has been illustrated by a fine picture of Mr. Edwin Long, the last which he painted. It occupies a very large canvas. The scene is a little bay of the Sea of Galilee. The time is shortly before sunset. The crowd on the shore is composed of many nationalities, of all ranks, and of every age. Jesus is seated in a boat, and His face unites manly strength with feminine tenderness. The moment is chosen when He has just ceased to speak, though His face and eyes are still shining with silent eloquence. The hands are delicate, yet full of strength. Between the finger and thumb of one hand He holds the grain of wheat which has helped to point the illustration, and two wheat-ears lie on His knee beside the other hand, which is outspread in appeal to His hearers.



The Pharisee and the Publican.

The Parable of Dives and Lazarus has not, I think, been often painted. There is an interesting example in the Venice Academy by Bonifazio, treated somewhat in the genre style. Dives sits drinking wine between two beautiful, fair-haired, richly dressed women to whom two musicians are playing, while another fair maiden is singing. The score is held by a negro boy dressed in crimson. Outside the pillared portico Lazarus begs for alms upon his knees, and a dog licks his sores. A symbolic burning house is seen in the distance of the landscape, and in the background are groups of youths flying hawks, or training steeds, while under the green arch of a garden walk are seen two lovers.

The Parables were chiefly made the subjects of pictures

in the Venetian and the German schools. The Good Samaritan has been painted by Paul Veronese, Bassano,[1] Rembrandt, and modern painters. The Lost Drachm is the subject of a fine sketch by Sir John Millais.

I have not met with many ancient pictures of the Prodigal Son, though the subject has often been touchingly rendered in modern pictures of all nations.

The most pathetic representation of it in the Middle Ages is that by Albrecht Dürer. The original sketch is in the British Museum. The youth is seated in the deepest degradation in a sort of German farmyard. Not a living being is with him. He is sitting in rags among the swine, which are so painted as to bring out the conception of their revolting animalism. The engraving seems to be earlier than 1500, and it is a touching circumstance that the features of the Prodigal recall those of Dürer himself.

Murillo painted the Prodigal Son many times. There are four scenes from the Parables at Dudley House, and two at Stafford House. The Return of the Prodigal is treated with homely pathos. As he kneels in rags before his father, a little dog recognizes and fawns upon him. On one side a servant holds up a gold ring; on the other, two servants are bringing the fatted calf.

Guercino's picture represents the father clothing his penitent son in a new garment. A dog fawns on the naked youth, whose figure, as well as that of his father, is fine and natural.

The picture by David Teniers (the younger), painted in 1644, represents simply a Dutch inn, with a bush for a sign. The Prodigal is sitting in the open air outside, between two women, drinking wine, while servants are obsequiously waiting on him, and one is casting up the bill. The grand dress and sword in which he has been

[1] National Gallery, No. 277. Sir J. Reynolds used to keep this picture in his studio. The Good Samaritan is in crimson, with a silver flask beside him. There is a touch of irony in the Levite, who is behind *in prayer*.

"ruffling it" lie on a chair behind. An old woman, leaning on a stick, stands by the table. In the distance, on the other bank of a river, is seen the Prodigal sitting in his shame and solitude among the swine. It is an excellent specimen of the art of Teniers, but it is a characteristic fact that the Dutch genre painters usually select the scene of the Prodigal wasting his substance. In the Dutch School we have Heemskerk's *Wise and Foolish Virgins*, and *The Evil One Sowing Tares*, by Bluemaerts.

There is a picture of the *Wise and Foolish Virgins*, by Blake, which is marked by all his pathetic imaginativeness. An angel with a trumpet floats above them; his wavy robes stream across the sky, in which, over the solemn light, are dimly seen the dome and spires of a city. The Wise Virgins, tall and stately, hold in their right hands their lighted lamps. One of them points to the city where their neglectful sisters must go and buy oil. One of the Foolish Virgins gazes with startled surprise at the angel in the heavens. Another, kneeling in a passion of entreaty, grasps the robe of a Wise Virgin in her right hand, while in her left hand hangs the useless chain of her extinguished lamp. One bends down and has veiled her face in despair. The remaining two are on their knees, gazing upwards in alarm and agony.[1]

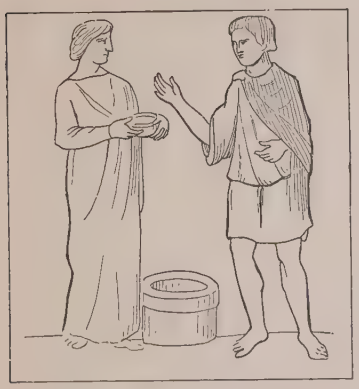
Of separate incidents during the brief public ministry of Jesus, there are but few specimens in the Catacombs. The lovely scene of Jesus blessing the little children, which modern painters have so often rendered, occurs but once in the earlier centuries. The appended picture is from an ancient sarcophagus now in the Villa Borghese. It is exquisite in its directness, tenderness, and simplicity. The Christ stands under an olive tree, between two youthful disciples, and each of His hands is resting on a young boy's head.

We have but one picture of this scene in the National Gallery. It is a poor picture, bought as a Rembrandt,

[1] Reproduced in *Art Journal*, February, 1893.

but perhaps by Nicolas Maes. Christ's right hand is on the head of a little girl, who holds an apple in one hand and has her finger in her mouth. It was a favourite subject with Lucas Cranach, and has also been treated by Rubens. But none of these painters has succeeded in investing it with the grace and tenderness which it would have received at the hand of an Italian master. In modern days it has been attempted by Eastlake (1839) and Overbeck.

The scene of Christ Talking to the Samaritan Woman by the Well is frequently found in the Catacombs and the early illuminations. I give the earliest, and one of the simplest from the Catacomb of St. Prætextatus. Martigny dates it as far back as the second century.



Christ and the Samaritan Woman.

The visit of Nicodemus to Christ by night has been treated by Tintoretto, and as might have been expected, by Rembrandt; but the pictures suggest no remark. They chiefly emphasize certain effects of light and darkness.

The Call of Matthew from the receipt of custom does not seem to have been attempted before the ninth century.

It has never been a common subject, but it has been painted by Mabuse, Pordenone, Carracci, and others. Caravaggio treated it with his usual brutal realism in the Church of San Luigi dei Franceschi at Rome. His pictures were so coarse and irreligious that the priests would have refused them altogether but for the influence of Cardinal Guistiniani. The chief peculiarities of this picture are the vulgar curiosity of the spectacled old man, and the thievish boy who pilfers the money which the Apostle has thrown down.

The ambitious request made by Salome for her sons, James and John, seems to have been chiefly a Venetian subject. It was treated by Bonifazio, Paul Veronese, and Tintoret. In one version of the scene the two Apostles are absurdly painted as two young boys. The best modern picture of the scene is that by C. R. Leslie.

The earliest specimen of "the great refusal" by the rich young ruler, is an interesting illumination of the ninth century, in the manuscript works of St. Gregory Nazianzen.[1]

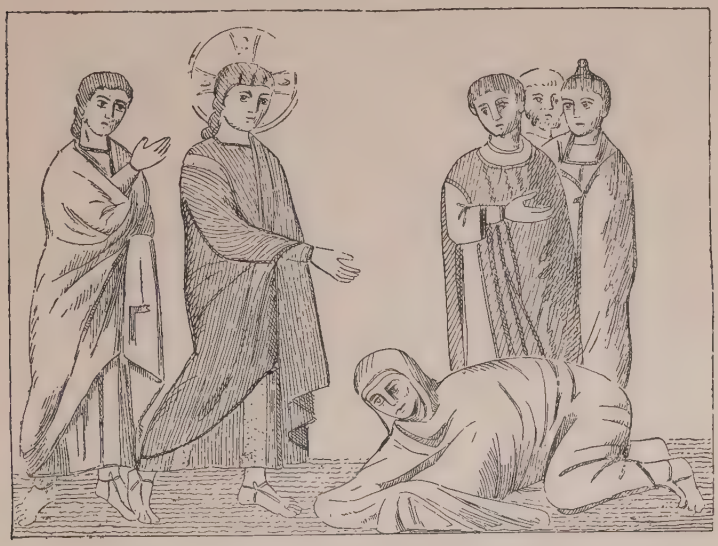
The scene of the Woman taken in Adultery is not found earlier than the sixth century in one of the mosaics in St. Apollinaris.[2] Like all ancient pictures, it is exceedingly calm in expression, and tells its tale of misery and mercy with Greek-like dignity, of which the traditions still survived the decadence of Christian Art in the East.

Mazzolino's picture of this scene is in the Pitti, and is one of his best works. On the left, a conscience-stricken Pharisee is hurrying away. Another, who (as often in

[1] Fleury, LVIII. 6.

[2] Id. LVIII. 2. See next page.

mediæval paintings) wears pince-nez, is stooping down to see what Jesus has written on the floor. On the right, Jesus, full of majesty, raises His hand in a gesture of warning and pity, as though rejecting the legal arguments of the two hard doctors, who hold, on either side,



the poor shamed woman. Two others whisper together about the judgment of Christ, — "Let him that is without sin among you first cast the stone at her." Above is a basso-relievo of Moses receiving the Law, as though to contrast the sternness of the Old with the tenderness of the New Dispensation.[1]

Rembrandt's *Woman Taken in Adultery* is a mere study of light and darkness.[2] Hardly anything is visible in it,

[1] Given in Rosini, IV. 119.

[2] National Gallery, No. 45. The subject was painted four times by Titian. There is a poor treatment of the subject by Tintoret in the Venetian Academy; and another by Bonifazio, which is full of confused figures. Of the pictures by Paul Veronese, Rubens, Giulio, Romano, and Agostino Carracci, there is nothing to remark.

but the figure of the woman herself in full light, and dressed in white. "The eye then passes to the figure of Christ, which next to her is the most strongly lighted, and so on to Peter, to the Pharisees, to the soldiers, till at length it perceives in the mysterious gloom of the Temple the High Altar with the worshippers on the steps."[1]

Nicolas Poussin's *Woman Taken in Adultery* is in the Louvre, and is a favourable specimen of the master. The sinful woman is represented with great skill in the self-abasement of genuine penitence, and the emotion of the conscience-stricken Pharisees is powerfully expressed.

The scene of St. Peter and the Temple Tribute was very rarely painted. It is curious that this should have been the subject of the supreme picture by the unfortunate Masaccio in the Brancacci Chapel at Florence — a picture so full of skill and nobleness that it formed an epoch in the history of Art. It is truly astonishing as the work of a youth, who, in 1425, — the approximate date of this masterpiece, — was only twenty-two years old.[2]

The scene of Jesus in the house of Martha and Mary is usually so painted as to exaggerate the eager hospitality of the elder sister. There is a well-known picture of it by Martin de Vos of the Flemish School.

We have a picture of the *Shew Me a Penny*, of the school of Titian, in our gallery. The Pharisee is trying to entrap Christ. Titian's own picture of the scene is at Dresden, and is one of his best works. It was painted in 1508. The type of the Christ is noble and dignified, and "the action of the hands supplies the place of words." Titian seems to have been the first to paint this scene, and Mrs. Jameson ingeniously supposes that "it may have derived some popularity from the contest between Charles V. and the Romish Church."

Peter Receiving the Keys of the Kingdom of Heaven

[1] Waagen.

[2] See Crowe and Cavalcaselle, I. 499; Layard, *The Brancacci Chapel*, 1818; Förster, *Geschichte d. Ital. Künst*, III. 151; Dohrne, p. 25.

We have in the National Gallery a famous Flemish-Italian picture by Pedro Campaña of the *Preaching of Christ in the Temple*. Martha is leading her sister Mary — here, as usual, confused with the Magdalene — to listen to the Saviour. Mary kneels humbly among the listeners, while Martha encourages her by pointing to Christ. Jesus, dressed in a long red mantle and brown tunic, is seated under a canopy, and extends His right arm to the congregation. A censer smokes on the marble pavement.

The same subject was treated in an engraving after Raphael, by Marc Antonio. It is based on the confusion of Mary of Bethany with Mary of Magdala. The story in *Il Perfetto Legendario* said that Mary led an evil life, and Martha converted her by leading her to Christ. Christ is seated on a throne between two pillars, with some of His Apostles around Him. His left arm rests on the head of a sculptured lion; His right is graciously extended towards Mary, who is being eagerly led up the steps by Martha. Mary timidly clutches her sister by the hand, and needs all her encouragement.[1]

[1] Reproduced in Mrs. Jameson's *Poetry of Sacred and Legendary Art*, I. 381.

Book VIII.

THE LAST SUPPER.

I.

WASHING THE DISCIPLES' FEET.

"I see thee bending
Girt as a servant at Thy servant's feet."
—G. W. Bethune.

The infinitely pathetic incident of the supreme humility of Jesus in washing the feet of His disciples naturally attracted the attention of many painters.[1] In our National Gallery we have, I think, but one ancient example, a somewhat poor and faded Tintoretto (No. 1130). As usual, he represents the scene amid very humble surroundings, in contrast with Veronese's idealistic magnificence.

The gallery has recently been enriched by the masterpiece of the subject by the late Mr. Ford Madox Brown. It is a splendid piece of colouring, and in all respects a great picture. Jesus, whose face is worn and pathetic, yet full of divine beauty, is bending over the feet of St. Peter, whose figure is quite ideal in its strength and dignity. A bad, mean Judas is stooping to untie the strings of his sandals preparatory to the washing of his feet, and the expression on his face is an indescribable mixture of shame, surprise, and cunning. The faces of the three other Apostles who alone come into the canvas are striking and varied. The only real defect of the picture is the weak, feminine face of the open-mouthed St. John, who is looking at the scene over the broad shoulders of St. Peter. The nation may be congratulated on the recent acquisition of so striking a sacred picture by a modern English artist.

[1] See woodcut 95.

II.

THE LAST SUPPER.[1]

"When the Paschal evening fell
Deep on Kedron's hallowed dell,
When around the festal board
Sat the Apostles with their Lord." — A. P. Stanley.

"Zweierlei gehört zum Künstler, dass er sich über das Wirkliche erhebt, und dass er innerhalb des Sinnlichen stehen bleibt. Wo beider verbunden ist, da ist ästhetische Kunst." — Schiller.

The Last Supper was painted by Giotto, Fra Angelico, and other early painters, and the subject continued to be a favourite one. In representing it, artists usually select for illustration either the moment at which our Lord instituted the Eucharist, or that at which He says, "One of you shall betray Me."

Signorelli chooses the first in a picture in the Cathedral at Cortona. He boldly removes the table, as had been done by Justus of Ghent in his *Last Supper* at Urbino, and he represents Christ moving freely among the group of His disciples; they are all kneeling on a marble floor, and Christ, with a patten in one hand, is taking round the wafers, which He puts into the mouth of each, while one of the Apostles holds the chalice. All of the twelve are filled with love and awe, except Judas, who kneels nearest to the spectator, and is engaged in counting and feeling the gold coins in his bag. His face wears an expression of disgust and bitterness; he is evidently

[1] For one of the earliest representations see woodcut 94.

thinking of his awful blood-money, not of the parting festival of love.[1] The picture was painted in 1512.

Leonardo's now ruined fresco in the Refectory of Sta Maria delle Grazie at Milan was the most consummate outcome of his genius. In presence of such a masterpiece, we appreciate the remark of Vasari, "Veramente mirabile e celeste fu Lionardo. . . . Nessuno altro mai gli fu pari."

The arrangement follows to some extent the ancient tradition. Christ is seated in the midst of His Apostles at the farther side of the table; the other side is left unoccupied. The Apostles are divided into four groups of threes, into which they have been broken up by the electric shock of the words, "*Amen dico vobis quia unus vestrum me traditurus sit.* Christ Himself remains majestic in His isolation. His eyes are bent downwards; His gesture shows how awfully He has felt His own words, but He is not watching the effect they have produced. At the right of the Saviour, Peter is leaning across the traitor Judas to whisper in the ear of the youthful and beautiful St. John that he should ask Christ whom He meant to indicate. Peter is ardent and excited; John is sunk in sorrow. Judas is grasping the bag in his right hand, while his left, half-lifted from the table, shows that he, too, has been alarmed; his face is powerful and bad, but not revolting. His arm has — at least in Raphael Mengs' engraving — with evil omen upset the saltcellar. St. James, at Christ's left, is shrinking back with a gesture of wild sorrow and astonishment, while one Apostle has started up and is laying his hand on his heart, and another leans across St. James to attract Christ's attention by his uplifted finger to the eager question, 'Lord, is it I?' The three groups at either end are no less expressive with their profound agitation and speaking gestures. Almost every head, except that of

[1] The picture is reproduced in the École Florentine of Charles Blanc and Paul Mantz.

Judas, which is flung partly into shadow, shews the highest nobleness and the most varied power; but the head of Christ is supreme in beauty and divinity. The force of Art could hardly go farther than it does here. Every other picture of the Lord's Supper is dwarfed into insignificance by the side of this.

"In this great picture Leonardo broke with all past tradition, cast a spark of fire into the assembly, and boldly ventured to change the quiet familiar celebration of Christ's Last Supper into a scene of passionate dramatic action. And yet only such a master could maintain that noble moderation in the midst of this ferment of feeling, in which sadness, pain, uncertainty, anger, indignation, and even horror, are combined; only such as he could, with his profound knowledge of the human mind, develop such varied expressions as the result of each various character, and, amid the struggle of contending feelings, place the Divine Master in the midst in calm resignation and wonderful majesty, only slightly dimmed by the expression of sadness." [1]

The picture was finished in 1497. Leonardo sought the

[1] Lübke, *History of Art*, II. 217. According to Stendhal, the exact explanation of the picture is as follows: Judas half turns to discover of whom St. Peter is speaking so passionately, and is preparing himself to deny everything. But he is already discovered. St. James the Less, passing his arm over the shoulder of St. Andrew, touches St. Peter to tell him that the traitor is at his side. St. Andrew looks at Judas with horror, and St. Bartholomew at the end of the table has started up from his seat to regard him more intently. At the left of Christ St. James protests his innocence by a natural gesture, opening his arms to expose his defenceless breast. St. Thomas, pressing near to Christ, seems to ask, "One of us?" St. Philip, the youngest of the Apostles, places his hands on his heart and rises to protest his fidelity. St. Matthew repeats the terrible words to the indignant St. Simon, who refuses to believe them. St. Thaddeus, who has first told them to him, points to St. Matthew to confirm them. The dying rays of evening light add deeper sombreness to the sad face of the Christ. — Stendhal, *Histoire de la Peinture Italienne*.

There are monographs on this picture by L'Abbé Guillon, *La Cénacle de L. da Vinci*, Milan, 1811, and Paolo Pino, *La Storia genuina del Cenacolo*, Milan, 1796.

THE LAST SUPPER. *Leonardo da Vinci.*

From the Fresco in the Refectory of Sta. Maria delle Grazie at Milan.

types of the Twelve in such models as he could idealize into the greatest force; "but not that of Christ," says Vasari, "for whom he did not wish to seek any earthly representation." When he consulted his friend Bernado Zenale, he advised him to leave the head of Christ unfinished, since he could never surpass, even if he equalled, the beauty and dignity which he had given to the heads of James and John. His pupil, Lomazzo, in his *Trattato della Pittura*, says that Leonardo followed this advice, and some think that the fact is proved even by the ruins of the picture. But perhaps all that is meant is that he never attained to the ideal of perfection which he had conceived. "Quelle beauté cependant," says M. Charles Blanc, "quelle grâce touchante, quelle sublime douceur dans cette tête du Christ! Le rayon qui l'éclaire, en effleurant ses traits abattus et attristés, semble provenir d'une lumière plus douce, plus pure, plus céleste que celle qui accuse les autres visages. Dans ses yeux baissés, dans sa lèvre émue, dans je ne sais quel sourire intérieur et plein d'amertume, se peint la suprème douleur, une douleur que les supplices du Calvaire n'égaleront point — la trahison d'un ami."

We are glad to know there is no truth in the story that Leonardo painted the prior of the convent as Judas; for this prior, whose name was Bandelli, was, according to the Dominican Pino, handsome and bald — "facie magna et venusta, capite magno et procedente aetate calvo."[1]

Leonardo's picture dwarfs the significance of all others, but we may mention Titian's *Last Supper* (A.D. 1564), now in the Escurial. In the usual Venetian way he dis-

[1] See Blanc, p. 19. Michael Angelo is said to have painted his enemy Biagio among the damned, and we know what licence in this respect had been used by Dante. The picture illustrates Leonardo's own views as to the aim of the artist in his famous sonnet—

"Chi non puo quel che vuol, quel che puo voglia.
Che quel che non si puo folle è volere. . . .
Adunque tu Lettor di questa note
Se tu vuoi esser buono e agli altro caro
Vogli sempre poter quel che tu debbe."

tracts the attention by such accessories as that of a dog gnawing a bone, and a partridge drinking out of a bowl.

There are three *Last Suppers* by Tintoretto at Venice. One is in the Scuola di San Rocco. Only eleven of the disciples are present. Judas has gone out, and the painter, after the fashion of his school, introduces into the scene two beggars and a dog. Another is in S. Giorgio Maggiore. Here the chamber is an Italian inn, and the chief peculiarity is that the ascending smoke of the lamp becomes a choir of angels. In the San Trovaso picture, Judas, as though to shew his utter indifference to the words of Christ, is helping himself to wine from a flask.[1]

The Last Supper was a frequent subject in the Spanish School. Generally — as by Pablo de Cespedes at Cordova, and Juan de Joanes — Christ is represented as holding up the bread in the form of a wafer. In the Cena of Carducho (b. 1522), Judas is traditionally represented with furiously red hair, to which the Spaniards have a great dislike. F. de Ribalta (b. 1550) in his Cena, avenged himself on one Pradas, a troublesome cobbler, who was his neighbour, by painting him as Judas. We may just mention the *Last Supper* by Benjamin West, painted in 1784 for George III., and presented to the National Gallery in 1828 by George IV.

[1] See these pictures described in the *Stones of Venice*, III. 302–361.

Book IX.

THE SUFFERING CHRIST.

"Gli amorosi pensier già vani e lieti
Che fien, or s' a due morti mi avvicino?
D' una so certo, e l' altra mi minaccia.
Nè pinger, nè scolpir fia più che queti
L' anima volta a quello Amor divino
Ch' aperse, a prender noi, in Croce le braccia."

— Michael Angelo.

I.

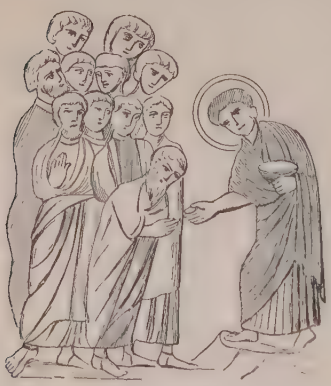
THE LAST SCENES AND THE SUFFERING CHRIST AS TREATED IN EARLY CHRISTIAN ART.

"During the Middle Ages, Man and Nature had grown apart; the Church regarded Nature as sinful and reprobate, and made it an object of religious horror. Authority prohibited investigation, tradition took the place of intelligence. During the early stages moral bondage closed the mind against the apprehension of phenomena, which were still timid and invisible to the eye, and when freedom began to assert its rights, the study of nature was ineffectual; but now the shroud was rent, and man stood face to face with men." — WOLTMANN, *History of Painting*, II. 4.

THE Last Scenes of the Life of Christ may be regarded as beginning with His triumphal entry into Jerusalem. I purpose to throw together into this section some of the earliest known representations of these events.

The Entry into Jerusalem, as it spoke of gladness and triumph, not of pain and horror, was naturally and characteristically a favourite subject with Christian artists as far back as the fourth century. Fleury gives us six specimens of it. The first of these will suffice to shew the traditional treatment. It is from the tomb of Junius Bassus. Christ, as in all these representations, is young and beardless.[1] He is seated on the ass, while one youth spreads his garment before Him and another is tearing down the branch of an olive tree. The subordinate figures are intentionally made smaller than that of the Christ, to express His divine dignity. In later representations the foal runs beside the ass, and there are many more figures, as in the very spirited sculpture on the Lateran sarcophagus.

The widow's gift of her mite is first represented in one of the Ravenna Mosaics in San Apollinare. The withering of the fig tree first occurs in a ninth-century manuscript.



The Last Supper is first painted in the Syriac Bible at Florence (sixth century), and is merely indicated in a symbolic way.[2]

The Washing of the Disciples' Feet is beautifully represented on the Arles sarcophagus of the fourth century, but does not occur often, or with many variations.[3]

The Traitor Kiss of Judas, so often painted in the Art of the later centuries, was a theme too painful for the artists of the Catacombs. It does not occur in the early centuries.

[1] Fleury, Pl. LXX. f. I. 1. [2] Fleury, LXXIII. 1.
[3] Fleury, LXXV. 3. See p. 351.

The Denial of St. Peter is represented not unfrequently on ancient sarcophagi. The cock is generally introduced. The earliest instance seems to be that on a sarcophagus in the Lateran, known as the Sarcophagus of the Resurrection. It is interesting to observe that Christ usually has His three fingers folded down, as though to imply the three denials, while St. Peter usually points to his own lips in grieved acknowledgment of his offence.[1]

"We have had many occasions to observe," says Fleury, "that the early Christians, when, on their monuments, they wish to recall the scenes of the Passion, choose those of which the representation would cause the *least* sense of horror. For this reason we constantly see on the sarcophagi, Pilate washing his hands. Numberless examples are reproduced by Bosio, Aringhi, D'Agincourt, and others."

The Carrying of the Cross and the Crowning with Thorns are also represented on Lateran sarcophagus, and this is perhaps the first appearance of the Latin cross. We append these most

[1] Fleury, LXXXI. 1.

interesting figures. Fleury remarks that it is Simon the Cyrenian, not Christ, who is carrying the cross, and that the soldier who seems to be pushing him along has a sterner expression than the soldier who is placing the crown of thorns on the brow of Christ Himself. This is due to the

innate reverence of the artist. We are far indeed from the brutalities of representation which we find in Rubens, and even in Albrecht Dürer. The most terrible scenes are still expressed with great reserve.[1]

As we have already stated, the monogram of Christ appears in the fourth century; the cross in the fifth; the crucifix not until long afterwards. The earliest known representation of the Crucifixion is in the Syriac Bible of the monk Rabbula in the sixth century (A.D. 586). The manuscripts, which were intended for the devout and learned few, shewed a hardihood which was not deemed permissible till centuries later, in monuments exposed to the gaze of the multitude.

This ancient picture, in which the reserve of the earlier

[1] Fleury, LXXXV. 1.

Christians was perhaps first broken, will be looked at with unusual interest. It will be observed that the two robbers are only girded with a short cincture round the loins. As the Roman custom was followed, they were in reality crucified naked, but the Jewish custom was less

revolting. In the first representations of Christ upon the cross, He is always clothed in a long *colobium*, which was a sleeveless tunic, like the Greek *exomis*. It was originally a senatorial tunic, afterwards adopted by priests and monks. The artists of later days did not shrink from representing Him only in a short tunic, and ultimately with nothing but a cincture.[1]

In this illumination Christ wears a nimbus. The globes on either side — one red, one blue — represent the sun and moon. The feet of Christ do not rest on a *suppedaneum*, but are nailed to the cross. Longinus is the traditional name of the soldier who pierced Christ's side. The general type of representation varies very little in detail for many centuries, but Christ was often represented standing,

[1] Fleury, LXXVII. 1.

as it were, free and majestic, in front of the cross upon the *suppedaneum*.

The earliest attempt at an idealized representation of the Deposition from the Cross is in the ninth-century manuscript of the works of St. Gregory of Nazianzus.

The first Resurrection in Christian Art is carved on a fourth-century sarcophagus, and is deeply interesting because it is purely symbolic,[1] except so far as the two soldiers are concerned. Between them is a cross surmounted by the monogram of Christ, within a laurel garland, the symbol of victory. At the top of the cross are the head and wings of a phœnix. Two birds, standing on the arms of the cross, pick the laurel berries of this garland. The Resurrection is, of course, directly represented many times in the monuments, manuscripts, and mosaics of later centuries; but the actual Risen Christ does not occur in these scenes before the sixth century in the Syriac Bible.

In an eighth-century ivory at Munich, we have an interesting early picture of the open tomb, the seated angel, and the three Marys.[2]

[1] Fleury, XCII. 2.

[2] Fleury, XCIV. 1.

An early representation of the Disciples at Emmaus, of a very simple character, is found on a ninth-century miniature in the library at Munich,[1] where there is also a picture of Our Saviour alone with St. Thomas, who is weeping.[2] The Incredulity of St. Thomas is not found, says Fleury, in the Catacombs, or on the sarcophagi. The early Christians did not deem it wise to shew to the heathen the picture of a doubting Apostle. Only in later ages, when the faithful became more numerous, they might sometimes derive consolation and encouragement from a scene which set forth the gentleness of their Master, who pardoned the weakness of His Apostle, and gave him a proof of His Divinity.

The festival of the Ascension was kept long before the age of St. Augustine, and he refers it back to apostolic days.[3] The scene, however, is wisely and reverently left unpictured in the first five centuries. They deemed it sufficient to indicate it symbolically by the chariot of Elijah mounting heavenwards. The earliest known *picture* of the Ascension is (as we have so often had to observe) in the Syriac Bible at Florence. It is highly symbolical. Above is Christ wearing a nimbus and surrounded by an oval aureole.[4] In His left hand is a

[1] Fleury, XCV. 1. [2] Id. XCVI. 1. [3] Ep. CX. ad Januarium.
[4] In later pictures this becomes a *Vesica piscis.*

book; His right is uplifted. Two angels hold this aureole as though it were a picture. Beneath is a chariot of fire, its wheels supported by the fourfold-visaged cherubic emblem, of which the wings are full of eyes. In each

corner the sun and the moon look down with human faces. On either side two nimbus-wearing and adoring angels are offering to Christ crowns of gold, with an eye in the centre of them, which lie on the violet napkin in

their hands. From underneath the fourfold cherub comes a hand which is directed towards the Virgin. She stands under the hill in the attitude of an *orante*. On her right are six Apostles, by whose side stands an angel pointing upwards; on the other side another angel speaks solemnly to six other Apostles who gaze into the sky. One of them is carrying a cross.[1]

[1] Fleury, XCVIII.

II.

THE SUFFERING CHRIST,

As treated by Albrecht Dürer.

"Are those His limbs with ruthless scourges torn?
His brows all bleeding with the twisted thorn?"

— Heber.

I have not in this book taken very numerous illustrations from the German schools of painting, but as Albrecht Dürer — perhaps the greatest representative of the German School of painting — made the Passion one of his chief subjects, it will be best to speak separately of his mode of treating it.

He designed (among others) two immortal series of wood-engravings, one known as *The Greater Passion*, published in 1511, consisting of twelve folio woodcuts; the other, in 1516, called *The Little Passion*, consists of thirty-seven smaller sketches. In one of his letters to his friend Pirkheimer, describing his visit to Venice, he frankly says that the Venetian painters abused his style because it was not ancient (*i.e.* classic), and therefore not good.[1] But they admired his colouring, and they could not surely have been wholly unable to recognize the force and imaginative genius of this *artium lumen sol artificum*, as he is called in the inscription on his tomb.

Our illustrations are borrowed from The Greater Passion, but I have described the scenes of The Little Passion.[2]

[1] Noch schelten sy es, und sagen es sey nit antigish art, dozu sey es nit gut.

[2] The *Kleine Passion* was reproduced in fac-simile in 1884, by George Hirth. (*Liebhaber-Bibliothek*, Vol. VIII., Munich.)

The whole divine tragedy is at once symbolized and summed up in the marvellous vignette of the title-page. Alone, and naked, but for a cloth flung over His knees and round His waist, Christ is seated on a rough block of stone, — perhaps intended to recall the rejected corner-stone. He leans His head upon His hand; His elbow is supported on His knee. His face, of unutterable anguish,

The Man of Sorrows. (Dürer.)

is half concealed by His hand. The terrible crown of twisted thorns is round His brows, and underneath it flow the long dark curls, dishevelled and evidently stiff with blood. His feet shew the marks of the nails by which they have been pierced. He is lost in thought the most

profound, the most bitter. It is the hour when His humanity lies heaviest upon Him. . . . He has drained the cup of bitterness to the uttermost, and His burden is almost too much for the Living Man, though the God knows that "He shall see of the travail of His soul and be satisfied."[1] The lines beneath are: —

"O mihi tantorum, justo mihi, causa dolorum,
O crucis, O mortis causa cruenta mihi,
O homo, sat fuerit tibi Me semel ista tulisse,
O cessa culpis Me cruciare tuis."

This series is as follows: —

1. The Fall of Man. Eve takes the apple from the mouth of the crested serpent, and gives it to Adam, who has one arm round her waist, and lifts his right hand in the acquiescence of despair.

2. Adam and Eve are driven from Paradise by the Angel with a drawn sword.

3. The Annunciation.

4. The Nativity.

5. Christ bids Farewell to His Mother, who, with a gesture of the deepest pathos, looks up to Him with clasped hands. The subject, so far as I know, is peculiar to Dürer, and his treatment of it is as simple as it is powerful.

6. The Triumphal Entry into Jerusalem.

7. The Cleansing of the Temple. The whole treatment of this subject is (as usual) too violent and uproarious. Two tables of the money-changers have been upset, and over one of the traders Christ is wielding a scourge, which is by no means made of small cords, and scourging the man, although he has fallen on the Temple floor among his scattered coins and money-bags, and has hurt his head in the fall. On one side are two Pharisees, who look on with fury; on the other a group of vendors is flying in alarm. One of them, with a goatish face, has

[1] T. Heaton, p. 128.

snatched up under his arm a frightened lamb and is hurrying off with it.

The Last Supper. (Dürer.)

8. The Last Supper. Christ and the Apostles are seated at a round table; Judas is the farthest off and grasps the bag; John lies on the bosom of his Lord. The

dish contains what is probably meant for the Paschal Lamb.

The Agony in the Garden. (Dürer.)

9. Christ Washing the Disciples' Feet. The heads are full of varied power and expressiveness, and the figure of Christ who kneels to wash the feet of Peter is full of dignity.

10. The Agony in the Garden. Christ kneels in prayer with clasped uplifted hands. In a burst of light

The Arrest. (Dürer.)

from the clouds an angel holds up the cross before Him. St. Peter sleeps in the foreground, beside him is St. John

with his face buried on his knees. St. James is looking up. In the distance the band issues from the gate of Jerusalem to arrest the Saviour. An alternative treatment of this subject is even more striking and pathetic. In this St. James is sleeping, as well as his brother Apostles. Christ is not upon His knees with hands clasped in prayer, but is entirely prostrated, with arms outspread, and His face on the damp earth, while the angel, half hidden by clouds, leans over Him.

11. The Arrest. Judas kisses Christ. *He still holds the bag.* A Roman soldier in scaled armour seizes Christ, while another binds Him from behind. Peter has violently smitten Malchus to the ground, and lifts a sword over his body, upsetting his heavy lanthorn.

12. Christ before Annas. One of the false witnesses lays his hand on the priest's shoulder, and with the other points to Christ, who is being violently maltreated by brutal soldiers.

13. Christ before Caiaphas. The high priest is on his throne, and rends his clothes, looking at Christ with rage and abhorrence. A soldier furiously smites Christ on the face. He maintains His perfect majesty.

14. The Derision. Christ has been blindfolded. One soldier strikes Him with open palms. A young man blows a ram's horn in his ear.

15. Christ before Pilate. The Pharisees accuse Him.

16. Christ before Herod. The king seems to be indignantly asking Him to do some miracle. Savage priests are exclaiming against Him. There is a wonderful contrast between His unmoved grandeur, and the false majesty of the mean-faced king in his crown.

17. The Flagellation. Christ has been stripped and His arms are bound to a pillar. Two executioners with faces of hard and fiendish cruelty are wielding their rods. One of them has rods in both hands. A Pharisee, in an enormous turban, is looking on with complacence. The face and attitude of Christ expresses unimpaired dignity in the midst of helpless anguish.

Pilate shewing Christ to the People. (Dürer.)

18. Christ crowned with Thorns. The faces of the torturers are here more ugly and brutal than ever. One drives the thorns deeper into His head with a small pitchfork.[1]

[1] It need hardly be said that all this is too violent. The object of the crown of thorns was not to torture, but to deride.

Another smites Him with a stick. A third, bald and wrinkled, puts the reed in His hand as a sceptre, and kneels before Him with his tongue out. Two stately Pharisees look on with contemptuous satisfaction.

19. Ecce Homo!

20. Pilate washes his hands. Christ is led off to execution.

21. Christ sinks beneath the Cross. From this woodcut Raphael borrowed the attitude in his far more elaborate, but less impressive *Spasimo di Sicilia*. St. Veronica is kneeling beside Christ with her handkerchief.

22. St. Veronica with the Holy Face, between St. Peter and St. Paul.

23. The Nailing of Christ to the Cross. The treatment of this infinitely painful subject is rare; and it is well that it should be so.[1] With a heavy mallet one executioner is just about to drive a huge nail through the palm of Christ, who lies outstretched on the cross. A group of women in wild anguish looks on from a little distance. Nothing could render such a theme for Art even endurable, unless the painter can give the impression that at this moment there flowed from the Saviour's lips the divine prayer, "Father, forgive them, for they know not what they do."

24. The Crucifixion. If it be lawful to paint this subject at all, it could hardly be done better than Dürer has done it. Mr. W. B. Scott calls the engraving in the Greater Passion "a work above criticism; noble beyond most of the creations of human genius. The sad mother sunk upon the ground and the group supporting her are truly touching. The sun and moon (they are represented with human faces) sympathize, and three angels save the blood from the blessed wounds in cups."

25. Yet the treatment in the Little Passion is even

[1] It is at least doubtful whether it is historically correct. It seems to be archæologically more probable that the Saviour stepped on to the *suppedaneum*, and that then His hands were nailed to the transoms.

more impressive, because more quiet and simple. "The darkness of the night heightens the solemnity of the

The Crucifixion. (Dürer.)

awful scene. Everything around is calm and at rest. No weeping angels fly about the cross; neither sun nor

moon is to be seen, only the black-hued sky above throwing out into full relief the figure of the cross. Even the women are still and composed in their sorrow. The Magdalene, it is true, cannot refrain from kissing the feet of Him who loved her,[1] but the rest stand by with restrained emotion. St. John only, of the group round the cross, testifies his grief in any violent manner; he throws up his arms as if in the agony of despair. Above him, above the quiet women, above the Roman guard, stands forth the everlasting image of the crucified Christ, the crown of thorns on His head and the blood shed for mankind flowing from His wounded side."[2] At the foot of the cross lies a skull, traditionally the skull of Adam. Even the group of Roman soldiers seems to have been stricken into awe and silence.

26. The Deposition from the Cross. On one arm of the cross hangs the crown of thorns; Joseph of Arimathea, or Nicodemus, stands on one side with a linen cloth. On the other are the weeping women. A disciple has ascended the ladder to uphold the body, and the helplessness of death was never more pathetically or powerfully represented than it is in this picture. The face of Christ is hidden, the head rests on the shoulder of the disciple, and the body in his arms; the long locks stream over his shoulder.

27. The Dead Body bewept by the Holy Women. The dead Christ is upheld by Joseph of Arimathea. Behind him stands Nicodemus with his vase of spices. The Magdalene is kissing the Saviour's wounded feet; St. John supports the mourning Virgin. Farther back another of the holy women uplifts her arms in wilder grief.

28. Christ is laid in the tomb by Joseph and Nicodemus.

29. The Resurrection. The four soldiers are sleeping

[1] Her long, unbound tresses sweep the ground.

[2] Heaton, 134. The arms of Christ are thin and emaciated, and His head leans on His shoulder in death.

by the open door of the rocky tomb from which Christ is issuing forth, — a figure of singular majesty and beauty. He upholds His right hand in benediction; in His left is a symbolic cross with its victorious banner. In the east the dawn has begun, and we see the women on their way to the sepulchre.

30. The Risen Christ appears to the Virgin.

31. The *Noli me tangere*.

32. The Supper at Emmaus.

33. The Incredulity of St. Thomas. In these four woodcuts the figure of Christ is extremely powerful and noble.

34. The Ascension. Only the feet and lower part of the robe of the Ascending Christ are visible in the clouds.

35. The Descent of the Holy Spirit at Pentecost.

36. The Last Judgment. This picture in its symbolic character is a singular contrast to those of Michael Angelo and Rubens. Christ is seated on the clouds of heaven. His feet are on a globe. His head is encircled by a tripartite blaze of glory (as is usual in Dürer's pictures), and on either side of it, as though they have issued from His mouth, are a lily and a drawn sword. Two angels, with large wings outspread, are blowing their mighty trumpets on either side, and beneath them kneel the figures of the Virgin and of St. Peter in solemn prayer. The right hand of Christ gives the benediction, the left overshadows the head, not of the Virgin, but of St. Peter. Far below, on earth, are a multitude of tiny figures. In the centre they rise from their graves. On the right they are being led by angels into a blaze of radiance; on the left devils drive the lost into the gaping monster-mouth which symbolizes the entrance into hell.

Such is Dürer's conception of all these events. The treatment is almost always striking, original, and expressive of intense feeling. He treats the scenes of which the representation is perhaps least desirable, with a reverence and sincerity which impress us more and more the longer

we dwell upon his work. The reader will be glad to see the estimate formed of the great painter by the accomplished president of the Royal Academy.

"Albert Dürer may be regarded as *par excellence* the typical German artist, — far more so than his great contempory Holbein. He was a man of a strong and upright nature, bent on pure and high ideals, a man ever seeking, if I may use his own characteristic expression, to make known through his work the mysterious treasure that was laid up in his heart; he was a thinker, a theorist, and, as you know, a writer; like many of the great artists of the Renaissance, he was steeped also in the love of science. His work was in his own image, it was, like nearly all German Art, primarily ethic in its complexion; like all German Art, it bore traces of foreign influence, — drawn, in his case, first from Flanders, and later from Italy. In his work, as in all German Art, the national character asserted itself above every trammel of external influence. Superbly inexhaustible as a designer, as a draughtsman he was powerful, thorough, and minute, to a marvel, but never without a certain almost caligraphic mannerism of hand, wanting in spontaneous simplicity, never broadly serene. In his colour, he was rich and vivid, not always unerring as to his harmonies, not alluring in his execution, — withal a giant."[1]

These scenes have been often painted since the Renaissance.

There is a series of the Seven Sorrows of the Virgin by Hans Memlinc at Turin, which give a history of the Passion from the Triumphal Entry into Jerusalem to the appearance of the Risen Christ; and of the Seven Joys of the Virgin in the Pinacothek at Munich, which begin with the Annunciation and end with the Coronation of the Virgin. They are brilliant in colouring and full of poetry and incident.[2]

[1] *Address to Students*, Dec. 9, 1893.

[2] See Woltmann and Woermann, II. 36, E. T.

Christ lamenting over Jerusalem is the subject of the well-known picture by Sir C. Eastlake, in the National Gallery (No. 397). It is serious and thoughtful. Jesus is seated on a stone under some olives, with Peter, John, and Andrew behind Him. His hands are clasped, and He gazes on the city outspread below Him. In the middle ground a shepherd is carrying a lamb, and on the other side a woman with a waterpot on her head leads a child. Near her is a hen gathering her chickens under her wings. A woodman has left his axe, which has been struck into the root of an aged tree.

The Cleansing of the Temple is scarcely ever painted in a satisfactory manner. Luther had the temerity to speak of it in language which can only be regarded as irreverent, and he ventures to apply to the conduct of Christ the question, "Was it not uproarious (*aufrührisch*)"? Perhaps he had been encouraged in his mistaken view of it by the tumultuous manner in which painters had represented it. The German painters were specially in the wrong, but even the Italian painters arm Christ with a formidable scourge, and represent Him as smiting the cowering and malignant money-changers as they grovel on the Temple floor. One instance of the kind may be seen in Marcello Venusti's picture in our National Gallery (No. 1194). The group of figures in this picture, which has all the Venetian skill in colouring, is said to have been designed by Michael Angelo, and in any case shews his influence.[1] One of the traders has on his head a basketful of cocks and hens, — a violation of all rabbinic rules which would have horrified the priests and Pharisees themselves. We have another treatment of the subject by Bassano (Jacopo da Ponte, No. 228), treated in the genre manner, which he was one of the first to introduce into Italian painting.

[1] Venusti named his son Michael Angelo.

THE AGONY IN THE GARDEN.

"Les tableaux — c'étaient des prières." — A. DE MUSSET.

The early Christians never represented this scene. Like so many of the other efforts to delineate every phase of Christ's sufferings, the impulse to paint it seems to have sprung from the vivid description of the Italian preachers, and from the morbid exaltation of the value of physical anguish which was partly the result of the older asceticism, but was intensified by the reaction against the enormous wickedness and religious decadence of the Renaissance epoch.

There seems to have been no desire before the thirteenth century to paint the Agony in the Garden. After the Renaissance, it was attempted by Perugino, Raphael, Titian (Escorial), Guido (Louvre), Basaiti (Venice), Tintoretto, Overbeck, and many others. In the National Gallery we have an *Agony* by Garofalo, "the miniature Raphael." In this, as in nearly all of the pictures, the three disciples lie asleep, and the crowd led by Judas is seen in the distance.

Giovanni Bellini's *Agony in the Garden* is an early work (c. 1455), but is technically remarkable for its attempt to render a twilight effect of light. It is, says Mr. Monkhouse, "the first picture in which a head is seen in shadow against a brilliant sky."

Tintoretto's picture is in the Scuola di San Rocco,[1] but it is one of his sweeping, hasty efforts. "It seems to have been executed altogether with a hearth-broom, and in a few hours." It gives several curious effects of light, and the only remarkable touch in it is the horror of his own crime which makes Judas turn his head away, unable to look on Christ.

Basaiti's picture (A.D. 1510) is chiefly remarkable as a

[1] See *Stones of Venice*, III. 341.

glowing piece of colouring. He introduces St. Francis, St. Louis, St. Andrew, and St. Mark.

Correggio's *Agony in the Garden* (N. G. 76) is one of his most admired pictures. It is a triumph of chiaroscuro. The figure of Christ is lighted from heaven, and the angel is illuminated by light reflected from Him. The angel points upwards with one hand, and with the other points to the cross and crown of thorns which are lying on the ground.

The Agony. (Correggio.)

In many pictures the metaphor of "the cup" is translated into a reality, and is even metamorphosed into the Eucharistic Chalice, enshrouded in a corporal, and with the consecrated Host above it!

The pictures of the actual Betrayal and of the Kiss of Judas are numerous. The scene is represented by the early pre-Raphaelites, and Duccio even paints the disciples flying, except Peter.

What all painters should have striven to express is the thought of George Herbert: —

"Judas, dost thou betray Me with a kiss?
Canst thou find hell about my lips, and miss
Of life, just at the gates of life and bliss?
Was ever grief like mine?
See they lay hold on Me, not with the hands
Of faith, but fury; yet at their commands
I suffer binding, who have loosed their bands;—
Was ever grief like mine?"

But they have too often lost themselves in scenes of wild confusion, and effects of moonlight and torchlight, and almost grotesque exaggerations of the action of Peter. Perhaps the most remarkable picture of the Betrayal is Van Dyck's *El Prendimento* at Madrid, which is regarded as his *chef-d'œuvre*. The ferocity of St. Peter is here very remarkable. With a terrific blow he has hewn down Malchus, who lies on the ground screaming in violent agony, and has (as usual) dropped his heavy lantern. The picture, as a picture, is very fine. Christ stands between two old gnarled olive trees, from the topmost boughs of which the glare of the cressets has disturbed a frightened owl. He has been seized by men with fierce and brutal faces, who are preparing to bind Him, but His own face is calm, radiant, and beautiful.

In painting Christ as He is led away, the artists have given free reins to their own invention, and have imagined insults and brutalities respecting which the Gospels are entirely silent. All that the Evangelists tell us is that Christ was "led away."

THE TRIALS AND MOCKINGS.

"Faire le bien, recolter l'ingratitude, se confier à Dieu."—Jules Simon.

There are many representations, even from early times, of Christ before Annas, Caiaphas, Herod, and Pilate. I do not propose to follow them farther than I have already

done. The appended woodcut, from an ancient sarcophagus, shews us Pilate washing his hands, which was a common scene for representation in early Art.[1] The greatest and best painters — as, for instance, Gaudenzio Ferrari at Varallo — avoid the deplorable error of representing Christ in abjectness and misery. In Ferrari's picture the high-priest's servant has just violently smitten the face that angels loved to look upon, but has not disturbed its angelic majesty. In one of Angelico's pictures, in a cell of San Marco, the mockery is only indicated with crude simplicity, by outspread, or closed hands about the head of Christ. These were sufficient to symbolize the blows with clenched fist (ἔβαλλον), and open palm (κόλαφοι), scourges (μάστιγες), and rods (ῥαβδοὶ), of which the Gospels speak. On the other hand, the pictures of the Dutch School are marked by immense exaggeration. In that by Heemskirk, a soldier is about to strike Jesus with his doubled fist with a violence which would never have been permitted, and would have sufficed to fell an ox. Honthorst's rendering of the same subject is a mere study of the effects of candlelight, though some attempt is made to give majesty to the form and face of Christ.

[1] Fleury, LXXXIII. 3.

THE FLAGELLATION.

"La vérité est cruelle." — Père Hyacinthe.

There is a very touching Flagellation, or rather *Christ after Flagellation*, by Moretto in the Palazzo Martinengo at Brescia. Christ has been stripped of His garments, and is seated on some wooden steps in a deeply pathetic attitude, with the cross lying at His feet and a reed held in His bound hands. Above Him is an angel of consummate beauty, with great white wings upholding the seamless robe, as though immediately about to cover His lacerated shoulders.

There seems to me to be more thought and expressiveness in this desolate scene than in any treatment of the same subject by the greatest Venetian painters. It holds its own even with the Velasquez of our gallery. Though infinitely sorrowful, it is yet majestic in its pathos, and wholly independent of any vulgar elements of horror or agony. If any one could see this picture side by side with a revolting treatment of the same subject by Rubens, in the chapel of the Carmelite nuns at Mawgan, near Newquay, in Cornwall, he would be able to measure the enormous chasm which separates sincere from insincere, and noble from ignoble religious Art.

The Scourging of Jesus, whether with Jewish sticks (Matt. xxvi. 67), or with the Roman rods (Matt. xxvii. 26), is a subject which hardly could have been painted in the early days when men knew by eye-witness the unspeakable horrors of the *scutica*, and of the *horribile flagellum*. Imagination was but a poor substitute for personal familiarity with the degradation which such a scene involved. No one could ever have dreamed of representing it who had power to realize what the scourging of Christ really was, and really meant. From such a sight angels would have veiled their faces, and for five centuries, at least, Christians would have regarded it as unspeakably

shocking to make it a mere subject for art, to be exhibited before all men's eyes.

Nothing can be more remarkable than the reticence of the Gospels respecting this, as well as all the last scenes of suffering. They tell us all they care to tell us in the two words φραγελλώσας and ἐμαστίγωσεν (John xix. 1). But painters chose to borrow much more from the isolated expressions of the Fathers and the morbid "revelations" of St. Brigitta. Because St. Jerome (in his commentary on St. Matthew) had said that "the capacious *chest* of God was torn with blows," they usually represented Him facing the spectator, with His back turned to the column, and the smiters scourging Him from behind. And, especially in the German pictures, they become more and more irreverent and brutal as time goes on. Fra Angelico, unable in his gentle soul to realize the scene, and most unwilling to intrude with curious scientific eye upon the Saviour's agony, merely indicates the fact. Two almost gentle executioners hold the slight string by which He is tied to the pillar, and uplift comparatively harmless rods, while Christ turns His look of mercy on one of them. Luini represents Christ as being unbound, and not only softens the horror by the introduction of four of his sweet and noble saints, but irradiates it by the divine beauty and majesty of the sufferer, undimmed, undefaced, undegraded by the tortures He has undergone.

But the Scourging of Christ was treated by some painters with revolting vulgarity. In the hands of such a man as Pollajuolo, it might become utterly offensive. Luca Signorelli could never sink quite so low as this. His *Flagellation* in the Brera does not wholly fail in interest. At the right, on his judgment seat, Pilate looks on, pitying and disapproving. But the defect of the picture is that we gaze with admiration at the anatomical skill and knowledge displayed in the astonishing figures of the two executioners, whose very scourges seem to whistle through the air with tremendous blows, and in this we

forget that the whole interest should be concentrated on the Divine Sufferer. We see at a glance that the painter was absorbed in the exercise of his own skill, not in the

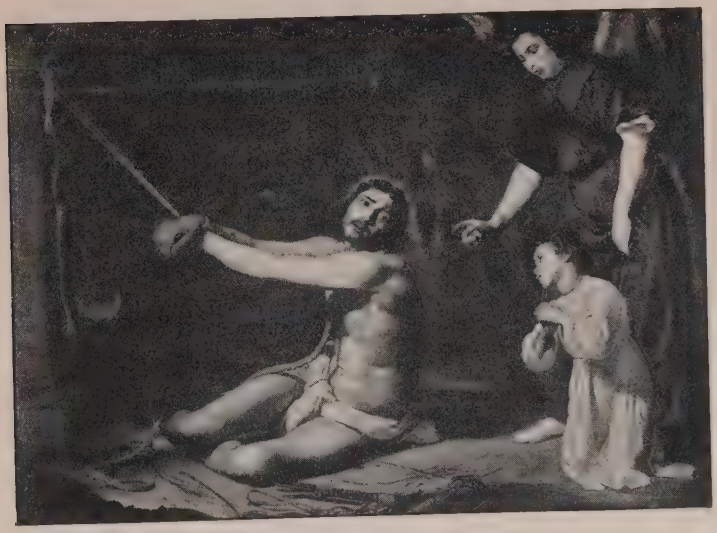
The Flagellation. (Luini.)

awfulness of the scene depicted. The picture is mainly a study of the nude. There is another *Christ at the Column* in the Brera, by Borgognone. It is pictorially skilful, but not to be dwelt upon. "The cheeks, bedewed with tears, and sprinkled with drops of blood, recall," as Sir C. Eastlake truly says, "some of the painful characteristics of early German Art."

There is a *Flagellation* by Morando, one of five scenes

from the Passion, in the Museum of Verona. There are but three figures. On the right a soldier is tying Christ to the column; on the left a savage and ugly executioner is raising with all his force a formidable scourge. The Christ wears the nimbus, and is full of majesty, though there is an expression of anguish in the look which He turns on the executioner.

But the most supreme treatment of the subject is certainly *The Christ at the Column*, by Velasquez, in our National Gallery. It is a recent acquisition, having only



Christ at the Column. (Velasquez.)

been presented to the National Collection by Sir John Savile, in 1883. What is very remarkable in the picture is the manner in which the painter stirs our most powerful sympathies, though the element of beauty is entirely absent. Christ is bound by His hands to the pillar. His figure, nude, except for a cincture round the loins, which is spotted with blood, is superbly painted. The horrible scourge has been flung down beside Him, and He is left there in His utter anguish, His hands swollen with the

cords, and His back lacerated by the blows. At the right an angel is bringing to Him a child robed in white, who bends to Him with clasped hands and an expression of the most profound and tender pity, while the angel leaning over the child points, as though to say, "Behold your Saviour." Christ has turned towards the child His face, of which the glory and the sympathy have not been overpowered by the intense anguish of the expression. He is "helpless to help the helpless," but from the faint aureole which encircles His head there streams one ray of vivid light towards the clasped hands of the little worshipper. No picture could more nobly express — and that with the almost wilful exclusion of all elements of beauty in child, or angel, or suffering Saviour — the glory, the victory, the divineness, the ultimate invincibility of holiness even in the hour and power of darkness, and under the appearance of abject defeat. If it be permissible to paint such subjects at all, it is in this spirit that they ought to be painted.

On the other hand, of all the revolting pictures in the world scarcely one is more horrifying than the *Flagellations* by Van Tulken at Brussels, and Ludovico Carracci at Bologna. Here one of the brutal executioners has forced Christ down to His knees and drags up His head by clutching hold of His hair. It is a picture to shudder at, and to abhor, — of such I will add nothing, "Non ragioniam di lor, ma guarda e passa."

THE CROWN OF THORNS.

"Hæc pugnantis galea
Triumphantis laurea
Tyara Pontificis :
Primum fuit spinea
Post modum fit aurea
Tactu sancti verticis."
—BONAVENTURA.

The Derision of Christ as a Mock King has frequently been made the subject of painting. We have mentioned Albrecht Dürer, and the over-violence of his treatment appeared in all other renderings of the subject. It has been painted by Guercino (Munich), by Van Dyck (Berlin), and at least twice by Titian. In his Louvre picture, two singularly savage executioners are using their reeds as levers to drive the thorns more deeply into the brow of the suffering Christ. One soldier, in chain armour, has his back to the spectator, and his arm is round the shoulders of his comrade, who peers curiously into the Saviour's face to watch the effect of the torture to which He is being subjected. We are at once struck by the tendency to monstrous exaggeration, and the contrast which it furnished to the few simple words of the Gospel, "when they had plaited a crown of thorns they put it upon His head."

There is a fifteenth-century treatment of this subject by De Coxcie, where an executioner is (as usual) raising a staff to *lever* the crown of thorns upon the forehead, while a youth kneels with a bulrush-sceptre; one soldier does mock homage, and another in full armour is about to strike a tremendous blow with his open palm.

Van Dyck has painted the *Crowning with Thorns* in a picture which is regarded as one of his masterpieces. A grave-looking soldier in a helmet and panoply is placing the wreath on the glorious head, while a half-naked man, kneeling in mock homage, thrusts the bulrush into the

bound hands. More than one of the spectators seem to be genuinely moved, especially the man who looks on at the right in pity and admiration.

Monsieur C. Blanc expresses the highest admiration for the ideals of Christ as set forth by Van Dyck, whether He be painted on the cross with saints and angels around Him, or alone on the mountain top, under the darkness of the night. "Recently," writes Monsieur Blanc, "I found myself standing before one of these pathetic pictures, and felt an extraordinary and quite unexpected emotion. Nothing could be more touching to look upon than the victim thus abandoned on Golgotha, in the depths of the darkness, while the disciples have departed, and Mary herself has been drawn far away from the accursed scene."[1]

ECCE HOMO!

The subject of "Behold the Man" does not occur in the Catacombs, and was never rendered by the Greek Church. Neither Giotto nor Duccio represent it. Many later painters tried their utmost to paint a true *Ecce Homo!* I have never seen one which seemed to me at all satisfactory. Of those in the National Gallery, Correggio's (No. 15) is perhaps the best. The pathos is heightened by the figure of the Virgin, who has loosened her hold on the balustrade over which she has been gazing, and is "swooning into the arms of the Magdalene." Not much can be said of the thorn-crowned Christ by an unknown Flemish master (No. 1083), nor of that by Roger van der Weyden (No. 712), ghastly with blood and tears; nor of that by Guido (No. 271), with the inscrip-

Ecce Homo. (Guido.)

[1] *École Flamande.*

tion, "Behold and see if there is any sorrow like unto My sorrow." This last does not indeed err on the side of dolorous ugliness, so much as on that of unreal sentimentality. He must be indeed a consummate master who could satisfy us in his attempt to render such a theme.

Under this head we may class Giovanni Bellini's *The Blood of the Redeemer*. It is thus described by Sir F. W. Burton: —

"A mystic subject. The risen Saviour, unclothed but for a linen loin-cloth, stands before us, encircling with His left arm the cross, on which hangs the crown of thorns. Of the pierced hands, the left presses the wound in the side, while the right is extended with open palm. His look and gestures seem to demonstrate that the blood which pours from the lance wound is freely given for the redemption of the world. The blood is received in a chalice by a little kneeling angel, winged, and wearing a long violet-gray tunic. The figures are on a terrace, which is paved with squares of marble, white and black, and enclosed by a parapet, decorated with antique reliefs modelled in gold on a black ground. Beyond this is a sombre landscape, with castellated buildings on the left, and ruins on the right; near the latter are seen two small figures. Towards the high horizon is a distant town amidst low hills. The streaky sky indicates early dawn."

No one can look at this picture without recognizing the intensity of devotional feeling by which it was inspired. Some may be surprised to see that the marble panels of the balustrade above the pavement of black and white marble on which the Saviour stands, are adorned with bas-reliefs of satyrs, and a sacrifice to heathen gods. Had this occurred in a picture of Mantegna, we might have set it down to classicalism, but what Bellini meant to indicate is expressed by Mrs. Barrett Browning: —

"Oh, ye vain, false gods of Hellas,
Ye are silent evermore!
And I dash down this old chalice
Whence libations ran of yore —
See! the wine crawls in the dust,
Worm-like as your glories must,
Since Pan is dead!"

Cigoli's masterpiece is the *Ecce Homo* in the Pitti at Florence, and in that picture he has represented Christ with nobleness and patient dignity. The picture by Gaudenzio Ferrari at Milan is also a reverential one. The suffering Saviour is not humiliated. His grand figure stands with crossed arms, and a reed in one hand, while two attendants, almost awed into pity, draw over His shoulders the purple robe.[1] Tintoret's picture of Christ before Pilate derives its "sublime magic" from the light and colours and "the gloom and chill of evening with the white-stoled figure standing resignedly before the judge."

STATIONS OF THE CROSS.

The Gospel narratives of Christ's path to Calvary are marked by severe and holy reserve. The love of horror led the Renaissance painters to aggravate and exaggerate every incident which they did not invent. Thus we get the seven scenes — afterwards multiplied into fourteen — which are known as "The Stations of the Cross."

The early Christians, when they had got so far as to bear any representations of such scenes, were content with the emblem of Isaac. We read in the *Pesikta Rabbathi* (f. 52), a comment on the four Books of Moses, that "Isaac bore the wood as one carries a cross on his

[1] The subject has been painted by Guido several times; by Sodoma twice; by Tintoret twice; by Murillo four times; by Annibale Carracci; and three times by Titian. One of Titian's is a large picture at Vienna, dated 1543, in which his friend, the execrable Aretino, is painted as Pontius Pilate.

shoulders." The death of Christ is also symbolized by the offering of Isaac.[1] One Rabbinic legend held that he had been actually slain, and restored to Abraham from the dead.[2]

There is not the least trace of the so-called "Stations of the Cross" in the early times. They seem to have originated with Martin Kötzel, a citizen of Nüremberg, no earlier than 1477. He had visited Jerusalem, and what is traditionally (but very uncertainly) known as the Via Dolorosa, and he got Adam Kraft, a friend of Dürer, to paint these seven scenes, ending in a crucifixion, at places on the road, between his house and the Church of St. John. The seven original stations are: 1. Christ bearing the Cross. 2. He falls.[3] 3. He meets the Virgin. 4. He falls again. 5. St. Veronica lends Him the Handkerchief. 6. He falls a Third Time. 7. The Entombment. The pictures of these scenes become mere confused representations of tumult, vulgarity, and violence. "The reader will not wonder," says Lady Eastlake, "that real Art has been shy of the subject. It bore contemptible fruit in such art as it has generally enlisted, and there are no objects which the eye shuns more instinctively than this unvarying series in the nave of a Roman Catholic Church."

Three pictures in our National Gallery represent incidents in the Procession to Calvary. The eye will at once be caught by the crudely glaring colours of Ridolfo del Ghirlandajo's picture in the first room. It was painted when he was only twenty-two, and is highly praised by Vasari. But the brilliant hues alone impress us. It is full of portraits of his own *garzoni*, and others. Ugolino

[1] See the learned treatise of Stockbauer, *Kunstgesch des Kreuzes*, 6. The Rabbis, dividing the first word of Genesis, *Beresh'ith*, into *Bara shîth*, "He created a ram," referred it mystically to Gen. xxii. 6. *Bereshith Rabba* ad loc.

[2] I may refer to my note on Heb. xi. 19, in the *Cambridge Bible for Schools*.

[3] The earliest representation of this apocryphal incident.

of Siena (No. 1189), two centuries earlier, is far inferior in skill, but treats the subject much more severely in his little picture. We have another, assigned to Boccacino (No. 806), which is merely a composition of many small figures. The favourite incident of the legendary St. Veronica and her handkerchief is painted by Meister Wilhelm of Cologne (about 1380), perhaps as an illustration of the Views of the Mystics, who held that the saint "studies to be quiet, that his still soul may reflect the image of God."[1]

In the earlier representations of Christ bearing the cross (as in the latest Catacombs and on the gates of San Zeno, in Verona) the cross is a mere light symbol. It becomes in later pictures a monstrous and impossible structure which no man could carry at all. The supposed incident of St. Veronica is perhaps a case of mythology developed by a disease of language, if the name be derived from *Vera Ikon*, "a true image." Many of the incidents painted come not from the Gospels, but from the hysteric fancies of St. Brigitha — such, for instance, as the striking of Christ on the neck and face. The Gospels do not tell us that our Lord fell or fainted under the cross at all. Probably the only reason why Simon of Cyrene was made to bear it, was because Jesus was too much weakened by long hours of insult and agony to move so rapidly as the impatient Roman soldiers — to whom a crucifixion was an every-day event — desired. The Gospels, moreover, tell us simply that Christ was "led away" to be crucified. The notion of His being dragged by ropes, and beaten along, is a wholly apocryphal invention.[2]

Happily, scarcely a single modern painter has dared to paint the actual nailing to the cross. Fra Angelico did,

[1] Beard, *Hibbert Lectures;* quoted by Conway, p. 27. The fourteen stations originated with the Franciscans in 1561, and were not common before 1699. For a fuller account of them, see Stockbauer, pp. 325–332.

[2] When Simon took the cross, he bore it entirely, not as the pictures represent. Athanas, *Serm. de Cruce*, 20; Ambros in *Luc.* x.; Jer. in Matt. xxvii. 32; Aug. *Cons. Evang.*, iii. 10; Stockbauer, p. 5.

indeed, handle it, but with such sweet reverence as to render it endurable. Some of the mediæval painters were guided by the "visions" of St. Brigitha. Later painters only revelled in anatomy. Rubens (in 1616) and Van Dyck (in 1632), among others represent, in scenes of nude and writhing muscularity, the *Elevation* of the cross; but until the decadence of all deep religious feeling in the seventeenth century, such subjects were shunned. Raphael painted the famous *Spasimo di Sicilia;* but he usually avoided such scenes, and might better have avoided this.[1] The *Spasimo* is the Virgin's swoon. None but the old ideal purists bear in mind the majestic words of Jesus, "No man taketh My life from Me, but I lay it down of Myself. I have power to lay it down, and I have power to take it up."[2]

THE CRUCIFIXION.

General Thoughts.

"Painting and Sculpture now are no more gain
To stir the soul turned to that Godhead dear,
Stretching great arms out to us from His cross."
— Michael Angelo.

"Ecquis binas columbinas
Alas dabit animæ,
Ut in almam Crucis palmam
Evolet citissime?"
—Bonaventura.

We have had occasion to observe that vast revolutions of thought and feeling have swept over the domain of

[1] There is an early *Christ bearing the Cross*, said to be by Raphael, painted for the nuns of St. Antonio, at Perugia, in the possession of Lord Windsor.

[2] In point of fact, in accordance with Roman custom, Jesus probably *mounted His own cross.* St. Athanas *de pass. et cruce.* So Ambrose in *Luc.* x.; so Angelico represents it in 1455. So Giotto had already done in a small triptych, now in the possession of Mr. D. E. Street. A ladder is placed against the cross and Christ is ascending it with perfect calmness and dignity. As regards the shape of the cross, we hear absolutely nothing from the supposed "Invention" of the cross by St. Helena, of which Eusebius is silent. — *De Vitâ. Const.*, iii. 42.

Art; that at first the early Christians shrank from representing Christ otherwise than by symbol; that from symbols they passed to types, and from types to distant idealizations. It was only very gradually, and in the course of long centuries, that reverent idealization was expelled by reverent naturalism, and reverent naturalism was ultimately ousted by coarse and irreverent realism.

The abstinence of early Christian Art from all direct representations of the suffering Christ was due to two causes. One was that deep and awful reverence for the Godhead, of which I have already spoken, combined with the conviction that Christ "dieth no more," but is ever with us as a Living and Glorified Presence; the other, the insuperable antipathy to the Gospel which such images inspired among the Pagans. The taunt that they "worshipped a crucified man," was one at which ordinary Christians found it difficult not to blush. They found it hard to answer the question of the heathen, "Quale cor habetis qui deum colitis crucifixum?" Nor would the heathen easily comprehend the reply of St. Augustine, "The Son of God was crucified, not that the cross should disgrace Christ, but that by the Sacrament of Christ the cross should become the ensign of our victory."[1]

The second of these causes disappeared gradually after the "Peace of the Church," and the conversion of Constantine in the fourth century; but the first was only worn away gradually during the subsequent 500 years; and awful reverence was gradually replaced by glaring and downright profanity.

In course of time the painters of what is called the Catholic Revival came to the rescue of the devout minds which had been offended by the brutalities of the *Tenebrosi*. But by the seventeenth century the old simplicity of faith was dead, its place was usurped by a sort of hysteric sentimentality. In painters like Domenichino and

[1] See Lucian, *Peregr.*, Cyril Alex., c. *Jul.*, vi. 194; Aug. *Serm.*, viii., etc.; Stockbauer, p. 152.

Carlo Dolci, the rapturous ecstasy which in Fra Angelico was spontaneous, had become affected, and perhaps half-unconsciously insincere. By that time Art could no longer rely on the inherent pathos and majesty of its subjects. The appeal to men's feelings had to be very moving. Ecce Homos and Madonnas bathed in tears, became the subjects in which painters aimed at securing their most acknowledged triumphs.

No doubt the needs of different ages are not the same, and the presentations of the Saviour of mankind will vary with the character impressed on men's minds by the religion of the day. But if the religion of an epoch has become weak, artificial, or mainly external, the decadence of feeling will be reflected in its works of Art.

Were the early Christians right or wrong in the intensity of their reserve? Is it, or is it not permissible — and if permissible, is it, or is it not desirable — to represent the Human Christ? If so, is it also allowable to paint Him, who is the Lord of Glory, in the depths of His brief and transient humiliation?

From personal feeling, and theological conviction, I should certainly answer that, in the abstract, the holy reserve of the early Christians was safer and more wise. But the force of custom is great, and the more dangerous tendencies of Art may be so silently and so powerfully corrected by inward convictions and habits of thought, as to render them partially innocuous; — partially, not completely. It is much to be feared that Christendom has lost — lost in reverence, lost in the innocent brightness of life, lost in tolerance, lost in the exultation and singleness of heart, which, as St. Luke tells us, were the beautiful characteristics of the early Christians, by altering the perspective of predominant thought respecting Christ, which prevails throughout His own teaching and that of the Apostles. The mistaken application of two texts, which, taken in their true meaning, give no sanction to the all-but-exclusive contemplation of Christ's brief temporal suf-

ferings, has led Christians to regard Him exclusively as the agonized Sufferer, and to substitute what He once did for all that He was, and all that He now does, and all that He eternally requires. Such unscriptural one-sidedness involves a wrong view of life, a wrong conception of Christianity, and a wrong estimate of religious duty. We may, with all reverence, use on this subject the words of the great Italian poet, philosopher, and monk, Campanella: —

> "If Christ was only three hours crucified,
> After few years of toil and misery,
> Which for mankind He suffered willingly,
> While heaven was won for ever when He died,
> Why should He still be shewn on every side
> Painted and preached in nought but agony,
> Whose pains were light, matched with His victory?
> Why rather speak and write not of the realm
> He holds in heaven, and soon will hold below,
> Unto the praise and glory of His name?
> Ah, foolish crowd! this world's thick vapour whelms
> Your eyes unworthy of that glorious show,
> Blind to His splendour, bent upon His shame."

I hold, then, that the late unscriptural, unprimitive, irreverent introduction of the crucifix into the ordinary emblems of Christianity, involved a failure in all true apprehension of the aspect in which we should habitually regard our Risen, Glorified, Ascended Lord. Of the danger of idolatry — real as that danger is — I will say nothing.[1] "It cannot be denied," says Dr. Dale, "that the image of our Lord Jesus Christ in His dying agony, with His hands and feet nailed to the cross, the crown of thorns upon His brow, and His face lined with suffering, may produce a very powerful impression on the imagination and the heart. There are some who found in the strength of that impression a sufficient justification for the devotional use of the crucifix. . . . But pre-

[1] See Jeremy Taylor, *Dissuasive Against Popery*, Bk. II. 6.

cisely the same argument might have been used in defence of the golden calf by which Aaron satisfied the craving of the Jews for a visible representation of Jehovah. And there are objections of another kind to this prostration of the soul before the image of the dying Christ. It makes our worship and our prayer unreal. We are adoring a Christ who does not exist. He is not on the cross now, but on the throne. His agonies are past forever. He has risen from the dead. He is at the right hand of God. If we pray to a dying Christ, we are praying not to Christ Himself, but to a mere remembrance of Him. The injury which the crucifix has inflicted on the religious life of Christendom, in encouraging a morbid and unreal devotion, is absolutely incalculable. It has given us a dying Christ instead of a living Christ, a Christ separated from us by many centuries, instead of a Christ nigh at hand. We have no more right to invent a divine appeal to the religious emotion, than we have to invent a divine appeal to the understanding or the conscience." [1]

Mr. Ruskin, intense as are his sympathies with all that is great and true in Art, has often raised a warning voice to the same effect. "In its higher branches," he says, "this realistic art touches the most sincere religious mind; but in its lowest, it not only addresses itself to the most vulgar desire for religious excitement, but to the mere thirst for sensation, for horror, which characterizes the uneducated orders of partially civilized countries, — and it has occupied the sensibility of Christian women invariably in lamenting the sufferings of Christ, instead of preventing those of the people, — for the art nearly always dwells on the physical wounds or exhaustion chiefly, and degrades, far more than it animates, the conception of pain. Try to conceive the quantity of true and of excited and thrilling emotions which have been wasted by the tender and delicate women of Christendom during the last six hundred years, in thus picturing to

[1] Dr. Dale, *The Ten Commandments.*

themselves under the influence of such imagery, the bodily pain, long since past, of One — and then try to estimate what might have been the better result for the righteousness and felicity of mankind, if these same women had been taught the deep meaning of the last words ever spoken by their Master to those who had ministered to Him of their substance: 'Daughters of Jerusalem, *weep not for Me*, but weep for yourselves and for your children.' . . . The wretched we have always with us, Him we have not always. Such I conceive has been the deadly function of Art in its ministry to what must be called idolatry — the serving with the best of our hearts and minds, some dear or sad fantasy which we have made for ourselves, while we disobey the present call of the Master, who is not now dead, who is not now fainting under His cross, but requiring us to take up ours."[1]

It is, I suppose, the undeniable object of the religious tendencies to which the crucifix and all the ghastly calvaries of Romish countries are due, to kindle our sensibilities respecting the physical sufferings of Christ. Yet in pursuing such a course we run directly counter to the entire teaching of the New Testament. We do not, in our recent innovation of "Three Hours' Services," go so far as the Mexican priests, who artificially darken their churches, and toll their bells, and go about in mourning, and encourage their "penitents" to scourge themselves — sometimes almost to death — with iron chains and balls, till the floor of the church swims in blood. But the whole tendency of the discourses delivered often seems to be to try and make people shrink with horror at the bodily agonies of crucifixion.

How totally different was the aim of the Evangelists!

In the fourfold story of the Gospels, beyond the barest narrative of facts touched on in the simplest and least detailed manner, there is but *one single word* devoted to physical anguish — the one word διψῶ, "I thirst."

[1] *Art of England*, pp. 54–56.

And how totally different was the teaching of the Risen Christ! His very first words to the first disciple who saw His risen form, were the questions, "Woman, why weepest thou? Whom seekest thou?"

During the great forty days we are not led to suppose that He spoke to His chosen ones a single word about His physical anguish, though He explained to the two on the way to Emmaus why it was of moral fitness that Christ should suffer before He entered into His glory.

And how totally different was the line adopted by the inspired Apostles!

It was necessary for them to insist that Jesus, though crucified, was yet the Christ, and to glory in the cross as the proof that He learnt obedience by the things that He suffered; but from one end to the other of the Epistles, there is not the most distant attempt to fix the thoughts on images of pain, but rather on images of glory. Throughout the whole New Testament the conception of Christ is infinitely too exalted to admit of any attempt to excite a sense of *pity* for His sufferings. Such a feeling is easily stimulated. Pity is roused to madness every year among thousands of Moslim in the plays which bring before them the tragic fates of Hassan and Hosein. Adoration, gratitude, obedience to Him, shame for the sins which crucify Him afresh, horror for the treachery which, in the name of the most orthodox and the most scrupulous religion, could consummate the crime of His murder — these are the feelings which the Gospel story is intended to awaken. Such feelings lead to the noble activity which a morbid and hysteric pity only tends to hinder altogether, or to divert into effeminate and artificial channels.

Nay, more; the Apostles and Evangelists seem impatient of dwelling even for a moment on the thought of Christ as dead.

"He died for our sins — and rose again for our justification."

"It is Christ that died — *yea*, *rather* that is risen again."

"I am He that liveth and was dead, — and behold *I am alive for evermore*."

Surely the early Christians were more in the right than we!

Let us take a salient instance of the total perversion of soul from all healthy religious life produced by the morbid, unauthorized, and hysterical dwelling upon the physical agonies of Christ. It is furnished in the life of "a monk lord of the fifteenth century," and has been told as follows: —

"No David, eager to fight the giant, this Galeotto Malatesta, but a wan, emaciated youth, half-crazed, half-saint. In the middle panic, with the horror of a triple sack maddening with fear the miserable Riminese, this prince left the city, to dwell in the monastery of Arcangelo, outside the gates. There he passed his days serene, scathless in the midst of peril; neither for himself nor his kingdom took he any thought. So strange this spectacle, so awful, that the very enemies of Rimini stopped in their onslaught, amazed. The lion, it is said, will not attack a sleeping prey. Eugenius, the Pope, in his temporal character the deadly foe of Rimini, wrote to its lord, bidding him remember the imperative duties of his position. The letter reached that 'magnificent man and potent prince' in the monastery at Arcangelo, where, clad in the coarse robes of a Franciscan friar, he led an ascetic, starved, and mutilated life. What was the magnificence of earth to him? So harsh were his self-inflicted penances, that the wounds on his body never ceased to bleed. What had he to do with rule and governance? The brothers of the monastery, and the young virgin wife who drooped and paled at his side, were all of mankind he knew or saw; and he himself the chief of sinners. Neither Pope nor armies could force him back to earth. Thus, friends and foes alike failed to touch him; there was

no pity in the heart of Galeotto the saint. Or rather, — common, yet tragical transmutation of the Middle Ages, — his pity took a retrospective turn; dead and dry to the present woes it might relieve, it rushed back in a mighty, impotent tide to the foot of that sacred and awful cross, whose divine tragedy was the continual spectacle of the saintly life. Pity for the dead Christ, throbbing, yearning, helpless, and indignant pity for the agonized Saviour, this surely lay at the bottom of all crusades, tortures, persecutions, inquisitions of the Middle Ages. Living ever with the crucifix in sight; dwelling ever and solely in presence of that dread expiation; to such fanatics as Galeotto, the example of the life of Christ was nullified by the terror and pity of Golgotha. Vengeance on the enemies of God! Vengeance on the traitors who still stab and crucify the ever newly sacrificed God and victim! So ran the tenor of mediæval piety. And the contagion of this fanatic sentiment slaughtered the armies of the East, tossed Albigensian babies on to lance points, and roasted before a ribald soldiery the pious Vaudois women. The martyrs of St. Bartholomew and the martyrs of Smithfield were hewn and burned by the strength of it; and from its armoury the Inquisition drew its deadliest weapons."[1]

Was the pity in any true way Christian or religious? Not once in the New Testament is such a feeling encouraged! It is surely irreverent; it is surely wasted; it is surely infructuous except of bitter, distorted fruit.

I open a recent book of devotion, and there I read, "Keep a crucifix and adore every day the five precious wounds. Let your kisses and your prayers be like pearls and precious stones, which you never tire of setting in each of the five wounds of the Saviour." Now I do not doubt the piety of the writer, but to say nothing of the doubt whether there were five wounds, — for the feet were often tied, not *nailed* to the cross, — I cannot imagine anything less like the conceptions of primitive Christianity

[1] *The English Illustrated Magazine.*

than a form of worship so morbid, so unnatural, so idolatrous, so meaninglessly distressful, as constantly kissing a piece of wood with five wounds painted on it. I think that St. Paul would have swept aside, very roughly and very indignantly, so gross and material an innovation. He would have ranked it with the ἐθελοπερισσοθρησκεία, or voluntary will-worship which he so strongly condemns. And this at least is certain, that nothing remotely resembling such service is even distantly hinted at by Jesus Himself, or by any Apostle or Evangelist; nor was known for a thousand years to the Church of Christ. Nor are we at all encouraged by the temper of mind, or tone of religion, which synchronized with the adoration of this symbol of agony thus so exclusively identified with Him of whose glad birth the angels sang. How little did it resemble the habitual conception of the early Christians, to whom their Lord was a presence of eternal victory and never-ending joy! The vision which St. John saw of Christ in the Apocalypse was no agonized, blood-smeared figure, such as you see depicted just where the population is most hopeless and most degraded, at every turn of the sweet valleys in the Romish cantons of Switzerland; no, but with His eyes as a flame of fire, and His feet glowing as in a furnace, and round His loins a golden girdle, and the rainbow shedding its seven-fold lustre over the seven planets of His crown! Even when St. John saw in the midst of the throne a lamb as it had been slain, it was still a lamb triumphant and victorious. And so, to the Apostles and the early Christians, even the cross was always an emblem, not of frustration, but of exultation; not of morbid anguish, but of transfigured sorrow; not primarily of pain and death, but of pain and death as the path to unending bliss, and the secret of eternal life. To the early Christians — and the difference in result is infinite — the aspect in which "the Lord of life and all the worlds" was regarded, was not that of a dying sufferer, but that of "the Incarnate Word, the Present Friend, the

Prince of Peace on earth, the Everlasting King in heaven." "What His life is, what His commandments are, what His judgment will be," these were the things to which they turned their thoughts; "not mainly what He once did, or what He once suffered, but what He is doing now, and what He requires us to do;" and, as Mr. Ruskin has said, "the fall from that faith, and all the corruptions of its abortive practice, may be summed up briefly as the habitual contemplation of Christ's death, instead of His life, and the substitution of His past sufferings for our present duty."

And yet, even then, it was very long before Christian Art had so completely plunged into unreserve as to paint the dead Christ, — to paint as a corpse Him who is alive at God's right hand forevermore. To paint the sacrifice of Isaac was as far as they dared to go. In some of the Catacomb-frescoes, a sheep receives the law, strikes the rock, raises Lazarus, multiplies the loaves. And thus, even when, in the fourth century, Christians wished to indicate the fact of the crucifixion, it is with distant and deeply reverent symbols. A lamb is depicted with a cross upon its head; or there stands upon a mound a cross, wreathed with flowers, or thick with jewels, with the monogram of Christ above, and by it stands a lamb, and doves are on the arms of it, and from the mound flow the four rivers of Paradise. How very far is such an emblem of peace and loveliness from the one-sided ghastliness of a realistic picture! It does not even attempt or dare to give an objective presentment of *the scene*, but conveys, with joyous gratitude and revering exultation, a suggestion of *the idea*.

"Even the sufferings of Christ," says Lord Lindsay, "are alluded to merely by the cross borne lightly in the hand as a sceptre of power rather than a rod of affliction; the agony, the crown of thorns, the nail, the spear, seem all forgotten in the fulness of joy brought by His resurrection. This is the scene on which the artists of the Church

seem never weary of expatiating — Death swallowed up in victory, and the victor crowned with the amaranth of immortality. We who have been born to this belief can but feebly realize the vividness with which it was held by the Antenicene Church, and nowhere does it shine with so pure a lustre as in the Catacombs." It may be regarded as certain that there is not the least trace of any crucifix for the first 500 years after Christ. The worthlessness of Garruci's supposed examples has been conclusively shewn by Augusti and by Dr. Messner.

In the sixth century we have the cross, but not the Crucified. In this century Gregory of Tours does indeed mention a crucifix at Narbonne, but only as an innovation; and in the story he tells, Christ in a vision, severely reproves the custom of representing Him undraped on the cross. In the seventh century the Lombard Queen Theodolind wrote to ask Gregory the Great (A.D. 604) for some relic of a martyr. He did not approve of this, but sent her oil from lamps in the Catacombs which burned before the tombs of the martyrs. On one of the gilt glasses is the earliest distant approach to a crucifixion; — and how deeply significant it is! Below is the tomb, with an angel on one side, and, on the other, a woman with a censer, and a man. Above we see the two robbers on their crosses; between them is — *not a representation of the Crucifixion, but a green, blooming cross*, on either side of which a little angel kneels, and over it, in a nimbus, between the sun and the moon, the head of Christ; on one side stands the Magdalene, and on the other St. Peter. This flask is preserved at Monza, and Muratori may well call it, "cosa troppo rara e quasi miracurosa." It forcibly illustrates the reverent dread of representing Christ on the cross, which prevailed even in the seventh century.[1] The same Pope, Gregory the Great, sent to Theodolind on the birth of her son Adulowald, "a phylactery," in the

[1] Stockbauer, *Kunstgesch d. Kreuzes*, 145. The picture is given by Didron, *Ann. Arch.*, xxvi., 1869.

form of a cross, which professed to contain a fragment of the true cross. It still exists in the Church of St. John at Monza, and on it is painted a crucified Christ, which is, however, of Greek, and not of Western workmanship. It represents the Saviour in a long robe, and standing on the footstool of the cross in an attitude of perfect majesty, living, and with open eyes.[1] In the tenth century there are some crucifixes, but the Crucified is represented in long robes, majestic and beneficent. The idea was always that of Christ reigning from the tree,[2] according to the old reading of the Psalm — *regnavit e ligno*.

In the four following centuries the robe is gradually stripped off, and the physical agony unscripturally emphasized.

The earliest known *painting* of the Crucifixion is that by Rabbula (A.D. 586). He was a monk of the convent Zagba, in Mesopotamia, and his picture is an illustrated manuscript of the Gospels, now in the Library at Florence. At this time small pictures of the subject began to be brought from the East into the West.[3]

Not till the eighth century is Christ represented on the cross to the *public* eye; but even then it is a Christ free, a supreme sovereign, with eyes open, with arms unbound; living, not dead; majestic, not abject; with no horror of great darkness overhanging Him, with no mortal agony on His divine, eternal features. In the earlier centuries the transient anguish was never contemplated, save as the

[1] It is given by Didron, *Ann. Arch.*, xxvi., 1869; and by Stockbauer, p. 160. The use of crosses as ἐγκόλπια, amulets worn on the breast, is older. Gregory of Nyssa mentions that his sister, Macrina, wore one.

[2] Psalm xcvi. 10, LXX.; Justin Martyr, *Dial. c. Tryph.* 73; Didron, pp. 264–266.

[3] Raoul Rochette, *Discours*, p. 60; see, too, Crowe and Cavacaselle. c. i. 61. Mr. Hemans (*Ancient Christianity and Mediæval Art*, 532) says that the earliest instance of a *Dead* Christ on the cross is in a manuscript of 1059. The picture by Rabulas is given by Stockbauer, p. 165, who gives others also; see, too, Rumohr, *Ital. Forsch.*, I. 304; Augusti, *Beiträge*, I. 62.

condition of unending and unimaginable joys; nor were men ever reminded of the brief Death without being at the same time reminded that, swallowed up in instant victory, the brief Death was but transition to an infinite triumph and an immeasurable life.

But, in the tenth century, in ages of deepening superstition and ignorance, there set in the full flood of realistic art. Then first did Christians venture to represent Christ dead, and splashed with blood, and "the last glimpse of divine Majesty suffered total eclipse from the exclusive display of agonized Humanity." But not till the eleventh century was there a bas-relief, and not perhaps till the fourteenth century was there a *portable* crucifix. And by this time there had begun a deep corruption, and a disastrous displacement of the true centre of gravity of our faith. Pictures of the Crucifixion could in some crude way set forth the external fact; they could not infuse into it that inexhaustible depth of the divine meaning which might be dimly shadowed by a symbol. In trying to represent what the Apostles actually saw, we may wholly lose sight of what they felt. Thoughts which are foreign to the Gospel were not only perpetuated, but exclusively obtruded; and in the physical image of the dead Christ, which is entirely foreign to Scripture, men more and more lost sight of His true ideal, of the significance of His example, of the real meaning of His Gospel, of His present exaltation, of His living spirit, of His joyous, pervading, dilating, radiant, loving, eternal Exaltation.

It must not be supposed that these thoughts are merely antiquarian, or that the influence of Art on religion is unimportant. Art may have its degradation in the direction of an all but blasphemous irreverence; hardly less is its influence in the direction of a horrifying superstition. The world and the Church got farther and farther from the conception of the purely ideal image of the Saviour as a beautiful youth, calm and gentle, typical of the rejuvenescence of mankind in Him. This emblem gave

way to the grim image of the Saviour as a dismal, macerated monk. "Light," as Dean Milman says, "vanished from His brow, gentleness from His features, serene majesty from His attitude. The image of the Lord on the cross — which at first, even if it represented pain, was yet pain overcome by patience — was no longer clothed with long drapery, but stripped to ghastly nakedness. It became the object of the artist to wring the spectator's heart with fear and anguish, rather than to chasten with quiet sorrow or elevate with faith and hope; to aggravate the sin of man, rather than display the mercy of God. Then at last, with convulsed limbs and vivid pain, and red, streaming blood, that most terrible object, the painted crucifix, was offered to the groaning worship of mankind." And when the joy and peace and hope of religion were thus drowned in seas of agony, when sin, and not God, was made the central thought of religion, floods of crime and degradation followed. What inquisitions and slaughter! What racks and thumbscrews and gibbets and implements of horrible cruelty were plied in the desecrated name of truth! What narrowness of belief and callousness of feeling, and mercilessness of precept and severity of judgment, and dark, dishonouring thoughts of God! For the Divine words, "Ye shall know them by their *fruits*," were substituted the false words, "Ye shall know them by their *doctrines*." Men and nations bowed their necks under the hideous tyranny and ruthless usurpation of inquisitors and priests. The pages of the history of a corrupt and persecuting Church were glued together with the blood of martyrdom. Christ, from the meek and lowly Saviour of all the world, became, in the fresco of Michael Angelo, a furious Hercules turning away from the pleading compassion of His human mother, to hurl and drive the miserable generations of the lost, as in a storm of agonizing raindrops, by numberless myriads, into the abyss of flame; or in the yet deeper degradation of the sensuous Rubens, He only is moved to

a little pity by the prayer of St. Francis of Assisi; or in the lowest abyss of a travestied Christianity, He looks down from His cross into the seven-times heated furnace of a flaring hell, full of horned demons, who boil the dead in cauldrons, or tear them to pieces with red-hot pincers — as though the dominant conception of all life, of all worship, of all religion were, for the vast majority of mankind, the absolute triumph of a ghastly fiendishness, and a horror, hopeless, endless, all but universal, which tongue can neither conceive nor name!

Not such in their exaltation, not such in their simplicity, were the conceptions of the primitive Christians. They exulted not in horror, but in bliss; not in vengeance, but in compassion. Their key-note was "fear not"; their recurrent burden was the Christmas carol, the angels' song, "Peace on earth, good will towards men." That was their view of the Gospel; and to them there was not terror and serfdom and despair, but hope and joy and peace in believing.

So far as we look beyond this world to a better; so far as we prefer poverty and persecution to the temptations of guilty pleasure and guilty wealth; so far as we are kind to one another, tender-hearted as members of one great brotherhood in Christ; so far as we realize the sacredness of our mortal bodies and the priceless ness of our immortal souls; so far as the dove of innocence, and the hart panting after the water-brooks, and the harp of joy, and the vine of life are our symbols; so far as Christ is to us above all things "the Shepherd," and we are the people of Christ's pasture and the sheep of His hand; so far as Christ is to us a living Christ, and not a dead Christ; a universal Christ, not a sectarian Christ; a Christ who cares not for elaborate will-worship, or anathematizing creeds, or burdensome observances, but for simplicity and sincerity of heart; a Christ of love, not of fury, vengeance, and hatred; a Christ of liberty, not of bondage; a Christ who does not hedge Himself in from free access by the tyranny

of usurping and erring priests, but cries "Come unto me all ye that are heavy laden;"—so far are we like those early Christians whose bodies rest in the Catacombs, and so far we shall not have looked in vain to the rock whence we were hewn, and the hole of the pit whence we were digged.

While, therefore, I speak of the treatment of the suffering Christ and of the Dead Christ in Art, and while I do not refuse sympathy with all that was pure or reverent in the tendency to represent Him thus, I still retain the views which I have here expressed. The test, "By their fruits ye shall know them," is as true of doctrines as of men. The exclusive and irreverent obtrusion of the physical sufferings of Christ has been prolific of errors and heresies. "Under the veil of a sweet but facile devotion, but one most false and erroneous" (to quote the words of Bishop de Ricci), "it hides many perils." We have seen the effects it has produced in one direction on the minds of brutally ferocious religionists, in the other, on the lives of dazed dreamers. It is also responsible for the heretical exaggerations of hysteric nuns and self-deluded quietists. It has led to the crude materialism of cardiolatry—the "Devotion of the Sacred Heart" developed out of the phantasies of a dreaming devotee. To it have been due the nightmares of visionaries and the delusions of stigmatics and convulsionaires. To it have been due such monstrosities of materialism as the so-called Vision of Bolsena and the bleeding wafers of ecclesiastical miracle. We read of at least two appearances of the Ascended Christ in the New Testament, but never of His appearance as a sufferer. He appeared in glory to St. Paul the Persecutor, in glory to St. Stephen the Martyr. The doctrine of His "continuous suffering" in heaven has risen only from the mistranslation of rhetoric into logic, of the syllogisms of emotion into the syllogism of reality. Christ is not suffering now, nor to be wept for now. "On earth," says St. Bernard, "He truly wept, was

truly sorrowful, truly suffered, truly died, was truly buried. But now that He has risen again, old things are passed away. Seek not thy Beloved on His bed; He is not here, He is risen. He is no longer among the dead. Changed in body, changed in heart, He hath entered into the Majesty of the Lord." [1]

[1] Bernard, Serm. xxxiv., *De verbis Origenis.* See some excellent remarks by Canon Jenkins. *The Devotion of the Sacred Heart*, p. 20.

III.

THE CRUCIFIXION IN ART.

"Veggio in croce il Signor nudo e disteso
Coi piedi, e man chiodate; e 'l destro lato
Aperto, e 'l capo sol di spine ornato;
E da vil gente d' ogni parte offezo."

—Vittoria Colonna.

We have already seen something of the manner in which the Crucifixion was treated in the earlier days, and by the thirteenth and fourteenth century painters. We may, however, revert for a moment to the aspect in which the scene was viewed by Fra Angelico.

In Angelico's pictures of the Crucifixion, we note at once several peculiarities. In the first place, they speak of that deep, intense feeling which we should expect in one who painted that awful scene, not with the pride of vain science, not in the fuss and fret of violent worldly competition, but on his knees, and with streaming tears, and in the dim, quiet, humble monastic cell. Next we notice the reverence and the good taste which shrank from the attempt at muscular anatomic nudities, as much as from the ignorant and ghastly profusion of blood. His object was not to exhibit the Crucifixion as a scene of torture on which men were to gaze with gloating and morbid curiosity, but only as illustrative of the Divine and willing sacrifice of the Son of Man, in His humility and compassion. He does not, therefore, force on us the brief triumph of death, or expend himself in glorifying the hour and power of darkness, but invites us to contemplate a blessed mystery of love.

And for this, among other reasons, there are no rolling clouds, or horrors of great darkness in his pictures, but the sky is bright, and the earth is green and soft, and the hills sleep in the sunlight, as though in prophecy that the short spasm of anguish was the birth-throe of an eternal blessedness; all evil is as much as possible excluded, as though it were not. "More readily he paints a sweet and pearly dawn, as in the extraordinary mystic landscape which accompanies the small mystic Pietà at Munich, where the gentle saint of a painter could not find it in his heart to make the rock of the tomb where Christ's fair body was to lie other than snow-white."[1]

Perugino also places his Crucifixion amid the smiling peace and tender softness of lovely scenery. The landscape is usually one under the solemn hush of evening, where silvery rivers,

"soft and slow,
Amid the verdant landscape flow."

The reason of this was, that the souls of these painters, filled with pathos and devotion, thought of the Crucifixion not so much as a scene of frightful agony and tremendous expiation, but as an object of humble and grateful contemplation. Their thoughts resembled that of Keble: —

"Is it not strange, the darkest hour
That ever dawned on sinful earth
Should touch the heart with softer power
For comfort than an angel's mirth?"

Francia is another of these children of the light whose true piety saved him from the errors of less holy and heaven-illuminated artists.

And this view was infinitely more scriptural than that of those later painters whose sole object it was to lacerate our souls with images of pain.

[1] Gilbert, p. 186. We may remark in passing, that Ambrose, in *Luc.* x., Hesych, *Hom. de S. Andrea*, and others, err in representing Jesus as entirely stripped. By Jewish custom the *lumbaria* were always left.

There are Crucifixions in our National Gallery by Andrea del Castagno (No. 1138), solemn in its gloom, but coarsely realistic; by Antonello da Messina (A.D. 1487); and by an unknown Westphalian master of the fifteenth century, full of the ghastliness for the sake of which the scene was painted. Far different is Bellini's *Blood of the Redeemer* (No. 1233). It is not a crucifixion, but the Risen Christ stands undraped, grasping His cross, on which hangs the crown of thorns. Of this picture I have already spoken. It represents the Risen Saviour in the type of the Eternal Sacrifice.

A kind of sovereign rightness of instinct seems to have preserved Raphael from ever painting the Crucifixion in the maturity of his powers. His one treatment of the subject was the work of his youth. It was painted when he was but eighteen years old, and is little more than a gentle reflexion of the current method of representation.

There was, no doubt, a deep difference in the general tone of feeling between the Italian and the German painters. Three painters of the Renaissance — Leonardo, Raphael, and Albrecht Dürer — endeavoured to work out an ideal representation of Christ.[1] The ideal of Leonardo, in his Last Supper, expressed the concentrated feeling of one moment when the anguish of the betrayal overpowered every other feeling. That of Raphael, in *Lo Spasimo di Sicilia*, is greatly influenced by that of Dürer, from whom the attitude is borrowed. In general, Raphael, in accordance with his natural character, represents Christ at restful moments or in death. His whole tendency was to the ideal of peace, softness, and beauty. A glance at the portraits of Raphael and Dürer will show how impossible it would have been for either to have produced so much as one of the pictures of the other. Their religious feelings were too widely different. To the Italian, sin was more or less "a soft and venial infirmity of the blood," while the German master realized it with Teutonic in-

[1] See A. Springer in Dohme, II. 275.

tensity. Consequently, in Dürer's often-repeated ideal of the Christ, which he reproduced on copper, anguish is predominant as of Him who bare our sins. This, too, is the characteristic of the Christs of Holbein. It was in the delineation of His agony and bloody sweat, His cross and passion, that the German painters put forth their best strength.

Yet, for mere power, and a somewhat repellent pathos, no painter ever exceeded Michael Angelo's rendering of this subject. It is not a finished picture, but a sketch now in the Taylor Museum at Oxford. The same thought spake throughout it as that which is expressed by Dante's line: —

"Non vi si pensa quanto sangue costa,"

written by Michael Angelo under the Pietà, which (as well as this Crucifixion) he designed at the request of Vittoria Colonna. When she received it, she wrote back to say that "nothing could be more living or more perfect; she has looked at it in the light and under a magnifying glass, and in a mirror, and is at a loss to express its wonderful fineness."[1] Michael Angelo often designed the Dead and the Suffering Christ, but this seems to be his only Crucifixion.[2] Much of the weight of the body appears to rest upon the arms. The head leans towards the left shoulder. The Saviour is in the agony of death. The powerful figure is almost wholly nude, and one leg is convulsively drawn up as though from anguish. The open mouth expresses indescribable suffering, as if it had just uttered the Eli, Eli lama sabachthani. The uplifted eyes, of which the white is chiefly visible, are beginning to close, and the noble type of the features is defaced by pain. The type here presented made so powerful an impression on the mind of that age that it became the motive for unnumbered Crucifixes.

[1] "Non si può cedere," she wrote, "più ben fatta, più viva, e più finita imagine."

[2] A sketch of it is published in Dohme, II. 451.

The rest of the picture is simple. There are no thieves, no spectators. Only the cross stands on a bare round of hill top, with the traditional skull lying, with a ghastliness quite Michaelangelesque, at the foot of it.[1] Only in the clouds on either side of the cross are two angels greatly foreshortened and intensely dramatic. The one on the left, leaning with both arms upon the clouds, rests on his two hands the cheeks which seem to stream with tears as he looks upwards at the sufferer. The one on the right, supporting his head on his right hand, has turned away from the dreadful sacrifice at which he points with his left. Michael Angelo never disdained to borrow from others — for instance, from Orcagna and Signorelli — a powerful conception. In the position of the two angels he has followed Giotto, but has breathed into the motive a power and a passion far beyond the reach of the earlier masters of the Renaissance, with their simple art and more untroubled souls. How unlike are these angels to the smooth, sweet, graceful youths of Perugino, or the *Amorini* of the Decadence! Their souls, too, are swayed by the sorrows and passions of the human race! The picture is stamped with the intensity in which Michael Angelo exceeds all other painters. Conventionality and tradition are utterly thrown aside, and the throbbing heart expresses all its woe.

Luini's Crucifixion at Lugano is rightly regarded as the finest picture in Northern Italy. To see this grand picture, and appreciate it rightly, one should see it again and yet again. The Church of Sta Maria degli Angioli stands, with its door invitingly open, close by the old monastery which is now the Hotel du Parc. The great fresco covers the wall which separates the choir from the rest of the church. It is dated 1526, and is wonderfully fresh and

[1] It was supposed to be the skull of Adam, and tradition referred to it the lines of the ancient hymn (?) quoted by St. Paul, "Awake, Adam that sleepest," etc. See Theophylact, Epiphanius, and Jerome. — STOCKBAUER, p. 58.

bright, in spite of the three centuries and a half which have passed away since the "golden hand" which painted it has crumbled into dust. What it must have looked like — how truly enchanting — when all its colours were fresh and bright, we can but imagine. Multitudes of visitors to Lugano enter the church and are content with a hasty glance at what looks to them like a mass of confused details; but when we gaze long enough to see that this fresco is an epitome of all the last scenes of the Gospel history, we repudiate the charge that Luini was deficient in powers of composition. We will say nothing of the two noble and pathetic figures of St. Sebastian and St. Roch, or of the six prophets below the actual picture; nor will we do more than mention the separate scenes, of the Entombment and the Resurrection on the right, the Agony in the Garden and the Mockery on the left, or the *Spasimo* and the Incredulity of St. Thomas. These are separate pictures of extreme beauty, but only belong incidentally to the central subject.

The crosses are of extreme height — and this is common in Italian pictures, though it is certain that in reality they were but little elevated above the ground. The penitent robber, in dying, has turned his head towards Christ; the impenitent robber has turned his head away. One leg of both of them hangs loose, and is supposed to have been broken. Over Dysmas, the penitent, is an angel presenting to God his white and kneeling soul; over the head of the other a bestial and somewhat grotesque demon has crawled to grip his soul, which is represented as that of a swarthy man. On the right is a grand centurion on horseback, said to be a portrait of the painter himself. On the other side is Longinus with his spear, his hand on his cheek. A group of four soldiers have been playing at dice upon a shield, and are now contending for the seamless robe. The face of the one on the left is the only bad and abnormal face among all these multitudinous figures, and it is interesting to notice that it looks very

like a reminiscence of one of the grotesque and malformed faces among the drawings of Leonardo da Vinci, with its monstrously protruding lip. Luini seems as if he could not draw a bad man; even the Judas in his Last Supper, which is full of obvious reminiscences of Leonardo, is neither base nor ignoble. On the other side of the cross the Virgin is swooning in the arms of the Holy Women. To the right of the cross stands a supremely noble St. John — one hand on his breast, the other outspread in astonished sorrow. On the other side — her arms spread out behind her in an attitude of most natural amazement — is the Magdalene. Her mantle has slipped off and her long golden hair is streaming down her shoulders. There are many other figures full of beauty and impressiveness, and here and there — as, for instance, behind the group of Rabbis — there is one face full of youthful beauty, purity, and tenderness.

But, after all, the chief meaning of the whole is concentrated in the central cross and the figure that hangs on it. At the foot of this cross is seated a youth with golden hair, in a simple tunic of blue, pointing upwards. He forms a sort of centre of light to attract the attention to the uplifted figure of the Dead Christ. This figure is quite supreme in its divine majesty. Transcendent and eternal peace has absolutely triumphed over anguish and over death. I doubt whether, in the whole range of Italian Art, any Dead Christ has ever been painted which, in worthy conception of the subject, at all approaches to this.

And to enhance the dignity of the picture, it is surrounded by angels. At the summit a great archangel leans downwards; on either side of him two others are wringing their hands. Over the I. N. R. I., above the cross, are three cherubic heads. Below them float two angels who adore the Dead Saviour; and below these again are two beautiful boy-seraphs. It is interesting to notice that the child chosen for the model of the one on the right seems to have been the same child whom Luini

has depicted in the Infant Christ in the Madonna of the Lamb; and the infant Baptist of that picture also reappears as the child in the arms of the woman on the left of this picture.

This Lugano Crucifixion is, in some qualities, one of the greatest pictures in the world. Saronno and Lugano shew what a painter full of life and power could do even in the terrible time after the battle of Pavia.

Among "Crucifixions" by the German School, we may notice a copperplate engraving by Martin Schongauer (†1488) — the "Buon Martino" of the Italians, a friend of Perugino. The cross is lofty, and at its foot lie a skull and a bone. The figure of the Redeemer is (as is so often the case) represented as emaciated. His head is crowned with a terrible crown of thorns, but the face is beautiful and peaceful even in its agony. Under each hand, and under the wound in the side, floats a fair angel with a chalice to receive the precious blood. Another leans round the cross from behind to hold his chalice under the bleeding feet. At the right of the cross, in sweet and majestic resignation, stands the Virgin, her hands folded across her breast. On the left, with flowing locks, holding his Gospel in his hands, stands a singularly winning St. John, in deep and painful meditation. In the distance is Jerusalem. The trees on the right of the cross are in full leaf; one upon a hill to the left is ragged, bare, and ghastly. The sides of the hill shew the rents of earthquake.[1] The characteristic of this very striking picture is its magnificent peacefulness, its entire absence of violence and exaggeration. The tale is told with the power, the pathos, the simplicity which reigns in the Gospel narrative itself, and the meaning of the tragedy is thus indicated with far superior depth than in the tumultuous and distressing scenes portrayed by many of the later Renaissance painters.

[1] This is given in Dohme, *Martin Schongauer*, p. 33; also in Woltmann, II. 118, E. T.

THE CRUCIFIXION. *Schongauer.*

From an Engraving.

There is a Crucifixion by Tintoretto in the Scuola di San Rocco at Venice, painted in 1565. It is powerful, but the painter has not sufficiently grasped the grandeur of the event to enable his imagination to unify all the separate details into one impression.

Christ has just said, "I thirst," and one of the executioners has dipped the sponge in the vinegar, while the other is about to reach it to Him on the staff of hyssop. The figure of the Crucified is noble, and is not degraded by vulgar horror. We have none of those coarse muscular writhings and brutalizing violences of posture which shock us in Rubens. The face is in shadow, the figure, almost alone of all the figures, is in perfect repose. "Though there yet remains a chasm of light on the mountain's horizon, where the earthquake darkness closes upon the day, the broad and sunlike glory about the head of the Redeemer has become wan and of the colour of ashes." But the picture wholly lacks intensity and concentration. The cross, as is usual in mediæval pictures, is much too high. Our attention is not absorbingly attracted to the central figure. We are lost in a multitude of accessories, the rage of the people, and the group round the fainting Virgin at the foot of the cross. One robber is being nailed to his cross at the left. The cross of the other is being uplifted on the right, under the superintendence of a man whose ass meanwhile has begun to feed on the remnants of withered palm-leaves![1] The drawing, the colouring, the separate details, are perfect. Mr. Ruskin says, "I must leave this picture to work its will on the spectator; for it is beyond all analysis and above all praise."

Yet another Crucifixion by Tintoret may be mentioned. It is in the Bolognese Accademia, and is much injured. There are but two figures — Christ and the penitent thief and the two crosses stand out against the background of

[1] This wonderful touch of imagination is pointed out in *Stones of Venice*, II. 168.

awful and stormy darkness. The Christ has all the mysterious majesty with which He is always represented by this mighty master. The head of the penitent is full of beauty, power, and deep feeling. He has torn his right arm from its cords, and lifts it upward as he gazes in ecstasy on Christ.

It might have been thought that Guido Reni was wholly incapable of treating this subject, but his Crucifixion in this gallery is one of his finest works. The darkness has covered the scene, but the figures are seen through it — the St. John, the solemn Virgin, and the passionate Magdalene, who is clasping the foot of the cross by which she kneels, covered with the deluge of her bright dishevelled hair. Another famous Crucified Christ, by Reni, is that in the Church of San Lorenzo, described by Mr. Browning in "The Ring and the Book," as

"Second to nought observable in Rome."

In this picture the intense gloom is lightened by the gleam of dawn behind.

The Crucifixion has been painted by almost every religious painter. Two of Van Dyck's Crucifixions are at Antwerp and Munich. The awfulness of the subject naturally appealed to the imagination of the Spanish School. That school delighted in representing misery, leprosy, torments, and dissolution. The masterpiece of Juan de Valdes Leal is Two Dead Men, at Seville, representing the decomposed bodies of a bishop and a noble — a picture so horribly realistic that Murillo declared that he *smelt* it. All the characteristics of the Spanish mind and of the Spanish religion, drowned by the Inquisition under fathomless seas of slavish horror, may be seen in Zurbaran's dark and hideous picture of A Franciscan Monk in our National Gallery, — the figure of a dirty, emaciated, cowled devotee praying beside a skull. The Palace of the Kings of Spain was "at once a palace, a monastery, and a prison." The art of their people often sank into a

degradation of spirituality, into an unnatural protrusion of asceticism, formalism, triviality, and all that is most hopelessly wretched in the experience of man.

The very simplicity of the manner in which the Crucifixion was treated by Velasquez, adds to the dark, desolate, and awful hopelessness which seems to breathe from the canvas which represents nothing but the figure of the Redeemer hanging upon His cross of shame.[1] It is known as *El Crucifixo de las Monjas de San Placido*, and was painted in 1639. Placed on a dark background, it stands out "like an ivory carving on its velvet pall." "Never was that great agony more powerfully depicted," says Sir W. Stirling Maxwell. "The head of our Lord droops on His right shoulder, over which falls a mass of dark hair, while drops of blood trickle from His thorn-pierced brow. The anatomy of the naked body and limbs is executed with as much precision as Cennini's marble, and the linen cloth, and even the fir-wood of the cross, display the accurate attention of Velasquez to even the smallest details." Of such pictures we may well say, as Luca Giordano remarked to Carlos II. about a picture by Velasquez, though in a different sense, "It is the *Theology* of painting!" They were dictated by a misguided and unscriptural devotion. Pacheco, in his *Arte de la Pintura*, places pictures above sermons in their power to move the minds of the people.[2]

In spite of this, we cannot but deplore the debased tendency of almost the whole school of Spanish painters to emphasize horrors. Bos, who painted much in Spain, may stand as an example. When called upon to paint Christ, he always selects the most appalling moments in the Saviour's mortal career. Thus, in his picture in the

[1] Of this picture, Stolz says: "Die tiefe Trauer des Bildes wirft mehr und mehr ihre Schatten in die Seele je langer man davor steht. Man fühlt sich angewandelt von Ueberdruss und Verachtung gegen alle Lust und Glanz der Erde."

[2] He says that painting has had "majores efetos de algunas almas que la misma predicacion," p. 466. Velasquez, in this great picture, has attended to Pacheco's rule that each foot is to be separately nailed.

Museum of Valencia, the face of Jesus is pale, emaciated, gory, thorn-crowned, and around it are the heads of soldiers gloating over that Divine agony, and grinning like incarnate devils."[1]

Perhaps the worst offender is the revolting Ribera (Lo Spagnoletto), many of whose pictures are as bad as was his life. He can only be described in the words of Lucretius, as "*Omnia suffuscans mortis nigrore.*" Lord Byron says: —

> "Spagnoletto tainted
> His brush with all the blood of all the Sainted."

He revelled in such horrors as the flaying of St. Bartholomew, Cato disembowelling himself, and Ixion on the wheel. He belongs properly to the Neapolitan School, but is Spanish in all his characteristics, without the redeeming trait even of religious superstition.[2]

It is a pleasure to turn from such pictures to "The Tree of Life," one of the latest and noblest of Sir E. Burne Jones's paintings. "This sombre monochrome, so absolutely original in design, so chastened and restrained in execution, ranks with the high symbolic works of the Pre-Raphaelites in its grasp of the idea of victory through suffering.

"The figure that hangs upon it is brooding in benediction over the whole world; the supreme type of that immortal love which fulfils the divine law of sacrifice. Men, women, and children are gathered beneath the shadow of the tree. On the one side is a garden of flowers, and on the other a harvest of corn. Along the margin of the earth is the inscription, 'In mundo pressuram habebitis, sed confidite, ego vici mundum.' No extraneous detail intrudes upon the perfect harmony of the Atonement. No over-elaboration mars the calm of that absolute resignation, of that unquenchable hope."[3]

[1] See Sir W. Stirling Maxwell's *Annals of the Artists of Spain.*
[2] Id. ii., 758.
[3] E. Wood, *Dante Rossetti*, p. 221.

THE CRUCIFIXION. *Velasquez.*

From the Picture in the Museum at Madrid.

Book X.

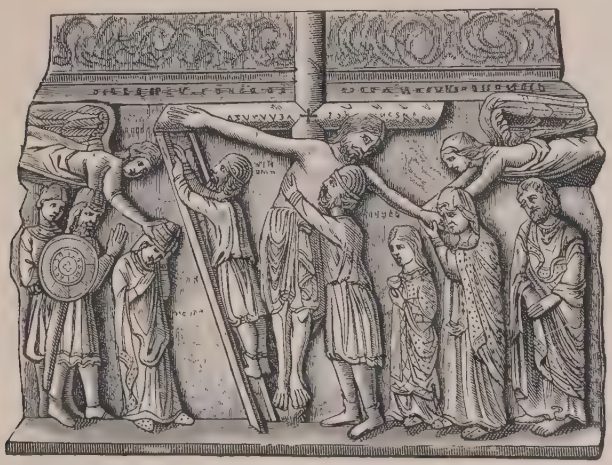
THE DEAD CHRIST.

I.

THE DESCENT FROM THE CROSS.

"Arbor, donde el cielo quiso
Dar el fruto verdadero,
Contra el bocado primero,
Flor del nuevo paraiso." — CALDERON.

THE taking down of Christ's body from the cross was a very favourite subject of Art, and has been rendered by most of the Mediæval painters. The subject is treated in the Byzantine style, with direct and simple force in a relief for the pulpit of Parma Cathedral, by Benedetto An-



telami in 1178, as will be seen in the accompanying woodcut. The Virgin and an angel uphold the left arm, on the other side the Archangel Raphael pushes forward a priest, whom a soldier threatens with his hand.

Niccolo Pisano depicted the subject about A.D. 1235, in his earliest work, a lunette over one of the side doors of San Martino at Lucca. He follows the old legend that Joseph of Arimathea supported the body, while Nicodemus drew out the nails from the feet, and the Virgin kissed the bleeding hand. The two other Marys kneel behind the Virgin. St. John holds and kisses the other hand, and behind him are three figures, of whom one holds the Crown of Thorns. On the hill below is seen the legendary skull of Adam. The superiority of composition over Antelami's is very marked.[1]

The *Descent* of Fra Bartolommeo in the Pitti at Florence is regarded by some as his masterpiece. "What effect there is," says Burckhardt, "in the profiles of the nobly formed Christ and the all-forgetting Mother, who impresses the last kiss on His brow! With what unerring dramatic certainty is the grief of John marked by the additional element of physical straining. There is no lamenting out of the picture, as in Van Dyck; no intentional heaping up of the impression by crowding the figures, as in Perugino."

I give but few illustrations of this subject, for it seems to me undesirable that it should be painted at all.

The two most famous specimens of its treatment are by Daniele da Volterra and by Rubens.

Daniele's picture is in the Trinità de' Monti at Rome. It is so much superior to his other works that the design has been attributed to Michael Angelo. "The sinking down of the body, round which the people standing on ladders form, as it were, an aureole, is wonderfully beautiful. The lower group round the fainting Madonna is excellent, but already sets the pathological interest in the place of the purely tragic."

The famous picture of Rubens at Antwerp is also regarded as his masterpiece. Rembrandt's sketch for a Deposition is in our Gallery (4143). The Deposition by

[1] Perkins, *Tuscan Sculptors*, 12.

Van der Weyden (A.D. 1443) in the Royal Museum at Madrid is regarded as a favourable specimen of his work. There is something painfully realistic in the helpless dropping and swaying of the Body, but the manlier grief of the Apostles is well contrasted with the swoon of the Virgin and the passionate tears of the Magdalene.[1]

[1] A picture is given in Woltmann and Woermann, II., p. 25. (E. T.)

II.

THE PIETÀ AND THE DEAD CHRIST, SUPPORTED BY THE VIRGIN.

"Sed dum resolubile corpus
Revocas, Deus, atque reformas,
Quânam regione jubebis
Animam requiescere puram ?"

— PRUDENTIUS.

A REPRESENTATION OF THE DEAD CHRIST, MOURNED BY ANGELS OR BEWEPT BY HOLY WOMEN AND DISCIPLES, IS CALLED BY THE ITALIANS A PIETÀ, OR COMPASSION.

THE Pietà was a frequent subject for sculpture. Perhaps no representation of the scene in marble is finer than that by Michael Angelo in St. Peter's at Rome. The Madonna is seated on a stone, and on her knees lies the undraped Body, relaxed by death, yet noble in its undisturbed majesty. The glorious Head, with its long tresses, leans backward upon her right arm, which is passed round the shoulders. Her face is still youthful, and she gazes down upon the dead limbs in a sorrow too deep for violent expression. Her left arm is outstretched and the fingers of the hand are half opened, as though she were asking, in the appeal of mute despair, what could be the significance of this awful tragedy. The treatment is absolutely antique, and disregards traditional methods. When Michael Angelo's attention was drawn to the fact that there was little difference of age between the Virgin and her Son, he explained the fact theologically to Condivi by a reference to the Immaculate conception, and the Aeiparthenia of the Virgin, as a Virgin *ante partum in partu et post partum;* but it may well be doubted whether such

considerations were in his mind when he wrought the statue.[1]

Though no Pietà ever painted gave me much pleasure, some of the pre-Raphaelite painters handle the subject with reverence and sincerity. But paintings of "The

The Pietà. (Michael Angelo.)

Dead Christ" become inconceivably revolting, and even worse than revolting, when the subject is degraded into an opportunity for exhibiting a vain and vile science. There is such a Pietà in the Brera — attributed to Man-

[1] Anton Springer, p. 17 (Dohme, *Kunst und Künstler*).

tegna, but perhaps in reality by the unhappy Castagno — which sinks to the lowest level. The nail-prints are horribly realistic and the faces of the two weeping Marys are ignobly distorted. Called a "Dead Christ," it is only a vulgar and ghastly corpse, with the soles of the feet set straight at the spectator, and the rest of the Body violently foreshortened. "It is exactly characteristic of the madness with which all of them — Pollajuolo, Castagno, Leonardo da Vinci, and Michael Angelo — polluted their work with the science of the sepulchre, and degraded it with presumptuous and paltry technical skill." It was probably only painted for practice, and then disgracefully consecrated by the Divine Name.

It is distressing to see that even Holbein could, without a shock of horror, present to the world so ghastly and irreverent a mockery as his "Dead Christ" in the Basle Museum. It is a dead body outstretched at full length; the limbs attenuated, the mouth horribly open, the lank, meagre hair streaming backwards, the eyes unclosed, the details revoltingly realistic, evidently a nude study from the corpse of a drowned man. Yet Holbein thinks to turn this offensive horror into a solemn religious picture by inscribing above it, "*Jesu, Nazarenus, Rex Judæorum!*" It is only less offensive than Castagno's because it is not livid: but that it should have been held permissible, and even laudable, to paint such pictures, should furnish a solemn warning to the daring irreverence of Art, and the erringly morbid thoughtlessness of professedly devotional thought. We must, however, distinguish between the faults of an epochs and those of the painters themselves. Art unconsciously reflects the tendencies of each succeeding epoch, and the art of an age naturally produces what the religion of an age approves. Custom paralyzes alike the heart and the mind with a fatal callosity.

Giovanni Bellini's "Dead Christ" with the Virgin and St. John is in the Brera. Christ is represented in a stand-

ing posture. It is one of his least successful pictures, and the St. John is both conventional and ugly; but the *cartellino* below shows the depth of feeling with which it was painted.[1]

There is a well-known Pietà in which many have supposed that they can trace the genuine work of Giorgione, but which has been assigned by H. Lücke, to Pordenone. The Body of Christ is being placed in a stone sepulchre by strong boy-angels. The form of the Saviour is of Herculean proportions and muscularity. The Head, greatly foreshortened, is sinking back into one cherub's arms. Another upholds the wounded right hand. A third is trying to pull up from the tomb a part of the striped robe to shroud the limbs. It is a work rather powerful than pleasing, and, though it has reminiscences of Giorgione's style, is probably the work of one of his imitators.

In our National Gallery there are three Pietàs which illustrate, in a striking way, the effect produced upon the treatment by the artistic character and aim.

Nothing can be sweeter, purer, more reverent than the lunette (No. 180), in which Francia has painted "The Virgin and two angels weeping over the dead body of Christ." There is no horror in Francia's picture. Christ

[1] In Dohme's series III., p. 40.

is dead, but is still beautiful and Divine in death. Death has not defaced or disturbed His mortal tabernacle. There is hope and even joy amid the sorrow of the Virgin and the angels, who feel that the death of Jesus must ultimately involve the death of Death himself.

Crivelli's (No. 602) represents the body of Christ supported on the edge of the tomb by two Angioletti. Like all his pictures, it has in it an element of affectation — a sort of pre-determined or exaggerated pathos. It is, however, less crude than some of Crivelli's worst.

Spagnoletto's Pietà (No. 235) betrays its origin in a decadent age and an evil school. There is no religion and no sincerity here — only a "subject." The Virgin, St. John, and the Magdalene are weeping over a dead Christ; but their weeping is not real enough to move us, and we are offended by the connexion of ghastliness with the Redeeming death. The Spanish School does not touch our hearts. Morales was called "el divino," and painted many weeping Virgins and Pietàs, of which "the object is to create devotion through images of pain; and to this end the forms are attenuated, and the faces disfigured by the marks of past and present anguish. Of beauty there is little, and of dignity less."[1]

In the Berlin Museum is a Pietà by Giov. Bellini, which is as little painful as the subject renders possible. It is a half length of the Dead Christ supported very tenderly by two angelic youths with outspread wings. They rest their cheeks with holy reverence against His falling locks, and each of them supports one of His arms. The hands and the side show the wounds, but the face is peacefully majestic in its grand beauty, and the form is of sculpturesque magnificence.[2]

The best and grandest Pietà produced in the seventeenth century (about 1630) is undoubtedly that of Van

[1] Sir F. W. Burton.

[2] It is given in Lübke, *Hist. of Art.*, II. 174.

Dyck, in the Museum at Antwerp.[1] Under a dark and stormy sky, the Virgin, with arms outspread, and a face of inexpressible anguish, is seated at the mouth of the sepulchral cave. The Dead Christ is a noble figure, treated with perfect reverence, and the head, still encircled by its flashing nimbus, rests upon the Mother's knees. St. John, a young man of grand features, with flowing curls, is uplifting the right hand and points out the wounds of the nails to an adoring angel, who with clasped hands is leaning towards him out of the clouds. Another strong angel, with wings still unfolded, is kneeling at Christ's feet, and his long, fair tresses fall over his shoulders as he hides his face in his robe to conceal the passion of his tears. Van Dyck excelled in the powerful expression of sorrow, and there are few Pietàs so moving as this.

We must allow a certain tragic grandeur to the way in which Titian has handled the subject in the Academia picture, which is said to be his last (A.D. 1570). Titian was then 99, and the picture was finished by Palma Giovane. It is almost a monochrome. On one side, painted in grisaille, is Moses, on the other a figure of Faith. There is an intense motherly anxiety on the face of the Virgin, and the Magdalene, in a frenzy of grief, with her long golden hair streaming wildly about her, points with one hand to the Body, and with the other calls another spectator to come forward. One angel stoops over a vase of spices, and another carries a lighted torch. The figure of the Lord in this picture is not degraded by the offensive scientific realism which is so displeasing in many of the Roman School. We can hardly agree with Sir C. Eastlake in regarding this picture as a melancholy evidence of the wreck to which old age had reduced the once splendid genius of the great Venetian.

[1] There are two of the same subject by Van Dyck at Munich. It was also treated by Perugino (Florence Academy, A.D. 1493); by Correggio in the picture called the *Vierge de l'Échelle*, because Joseph of Arimathea is descending a ladder from the cross; by Murillo at Seville, and by many others.

In the Academia there is also a Dead Christ by Bissolo, which has much charm of pathos and refinement.

The Dead Christ. (Bissolo.)

Raphael's "Entombment," finished in 1507, and now in the Borghese Gallery, marks an important phase in his artistic development. He abandoned the more formal tradition of representing the subject. To the left are two Apostles, who carry the head and shoulders of the Dead Christ, while St. John gazes down between them at His face. Another disciple lifts the legs, but between the two bearers of the corpse rushes in the distracted Magdalene to look once more at the dead features and uplift the pierced hand. On the right three women are attending to the fainting Virgin; Golgotha and the Three Crosses are visible in the distance. Powerful and skilful as is the composition, the picture is utterly displeasing. The only impression left on the mind by the exaggerated efforts and attitudes of the Apostles is the extreme physical weight of the Body. The Dead Christ is not adequately conceived, and there is none of the beauty and majesty of death on the distorted face.

Among other Entombments, that of Tintoret in the

Gallery of Parma must hold a high place. The body of the majestic Christ is supported by two angels, while a third, with his great crimson wings outspread, upholds the arms. "Dwelling on the event as the fulfilment of the prophecy, 'He made His grave with the wicked and with the rich in His death,' Tintoret desires to direct the mind of the spectator to the receiving of the Body of Christ in contrast to the houseless birth and the homeless life. And therefore behind the ghastly black and withered tomb-grass, which shakes its blades above the rocks of the sepulchre, there is seen . . . a desert place, where the foxes have holes and the birds of the air have nests; and against the barred twilight of the melancholy sky are seen the mouldering beams and shattered roofing of a ruined cattle-shed, canopy of the Nativity."[1]

There is another Entombment by Tintoret in the Brera Gallery at Milan, and it is worthily treated. The Dead Body of Christ rests on a sheet of fine white linen, on which is laid a robe of crimson. The relaxed right hand lies open beside a crown of thorns. St. Peter and the Virgin, standing at His head, look down with adoring pity on the glorious face, which wears an expression not of defeat or agony, but of divine repose, while the lips almost seem to be breaking into a smile of radiant peace. On the right stands the impassioned Magdalene, her golden hair all in neglected confusion, and both arms outstretched as she bends downward, her whole face rapt into an expression of intense sorrow and devotion.

In our National Gallery there is a poor Entombment by Palmezzano (No. 596); "Angels weeping over the Dead Christ" by Guercino (No. 22); a very displeasing one by Van der Weyden (No. 664); a painful unfinished one by Michael Angelo (No. 790). The Renaissance and the later Catholic revival unhappily delighted in such themes. They showed a tendency to revel in artificial horrors, and religion, after it had been half paganized, did not recover

[1] Ruskin.

its old cheerful simplicity, but became "hysterical, dogmatic, hypocritical, and sacerdotal — not Christianity indeed, but Catholicism galvanized by terror into reactionary movement."[1]

There is an Entombment by Ford Madox Brown, which is one of his finest works, at once austere, pathetic, and full of spiritual fervour. "The dignity of the human body, the solemnity and awfulness of physical death, the tender charm of child life, and child innocence, the mystery of immortality, and the apprehension of a 'risen' life, — all these things are brought within the range of thought opened up by that sombre and majestic design. The faces of the women bending over the loved corpse are full of grief and perplexity, yet even in the atmosphere of death there is a subtle breath of triumph and of hope, and sense that the body is not all, that what is left is but the shell, the 'house of Life'; the true Life is not dead, but gone — whither? The tender light that plays round the mourners, and that contrast of the vigorous, lithe body of the young child with the aged and shattered frame of the dead martyr, seem to voice the eternal protest of the heart against annihilation, the irrepressible demand of the soul for a future life."[2]

[1] Symonds, VII. 403.

[2] E. Wood, *Dante Rossetti*, p. 220.

III.

THE DESCENT INTO HELL.

"Io era nuovo in questo stato
Quando ci vidi venire un possente
Con segno di vittoria incoronato."
— DANTE, *Inf.*, IV. 52–55.

"When Thou hadst overcome the sharpness of death, Thou didst open the kingdom of heaven to all believers." — *Te Deum.*

CHRIST'S Descent into Hades, known in old English writers as The Harrowing of Hell, was a doctrine which the Church mainly derived from 1 Pet. iii. 19. Its object was believed to be the deliverance of the patriarchs of the old Dispensation from their prison-house, that they might enter Paradise in the Triumph of Christ.

Fra Angelico's *Descent of Christ into Limbo* is in San Marco at Florence. It is full of feeling. "We observe at once the intense fixed, statue-like silence of ineffable adoration upon the spirits in prison at the feet of Christ, side by side, the hands lifted, and the knees bowed, and the lips trembling together." [1]

The descent of Christ to the under-world to deliver the spirits in prison, was related at length in the Latin Gospel of Nicodemus. A cry is heard in the abyss, "Lift up your heads, O ye gates, and be ye lift up ye everlasting doors, and the King of Glory shall come in." Satan and Hades cry, "Who is the King of Glory?" And the voice of the Lord answers them, "The Lord strong and mighty, the Lord mighty in battle." Then the penitent robber enters and Satan closes the door on him. David, burning with

[1] Ruskin, *Modern Painters*, II. 52.

anger, cries to Satan, "Oh thou most polluted one, open thy gates that the King of Glory may come in," and all the saints of God rise against Satan. Then Hades suddenly trembles, the gates and locks of death are demolished and fall to the ground, and all things are laid open.[1] "Then the Lord Jesus, the Saviour of all, who is most kind and gentle, saluted Adam graciously, and said to him, "Peace to thee, Adam, together with thy children through immeasurable ages." Then father Adam fell down at the feet of the Lord, and arose again and kissed His hands and wept violently, saying, "Behold the hands that fashioned me. . . ." Then all the Saints worshipped Him, and at their request He leaves His cross in the underworld as the symbol of victory in Hades, where it will remain forever.

But no painter has surpassed Albrecht Dürer in the intensity of imaginative power with which he has treated this subject in his *Little Passion.*

"In this cut," says Mrs. Heaton, "the originality of Dürer's genius bursts forth in all its strength. There was no traditional mode of representation of this subject, and therefore his weird fancy rioted with compositions untrammelled by any previous form of orthodox treatment. Hell is represented here, not as usual by the fiery mouth of a dragon, but as a ruined underground mansion, out of the dark vaults of which Christ, holding the banner of victory in one hand, is helping, or rather dragging, up the souls of His ancestors. Adam and Eve have been already liberated, and Adam, a powerful old man, stands behind Christ, holding an apple in one hand, the symbol of his fall, and the cross in the other, the emblem of his redemption.[2] Eve stands with her back turned to the spectators. A hideous demon of animal form, somewhat similar to the one that follows the Knight in the plate of 'the Knight, Death, and the Devil,' leans out of a sort of window above

[1] Comp. Dante, *Inf.*, XXI. 106–114.

[2] Dante, *Inf.*, IV. 55. Trasseci l'ombra del primo parente, etc.

the arched entrance to Hell, and with a face of alarm and rage, aims a blow at the Saviour with a short, broken lance.

The Descent into Hell. (Albrecht Dürer.)

Other fearful forms lurk behind; and above, a dreadful bat-like form, with ram's horns and scaly tail, sounds on a

horn a note of alarm at the invasion of his territory by the power of light." [1]

Such is the beauty and dignity with which Dürer handled the scene of Christ's descent into Hell, as described in the Gospel of Nicodemus. If we desire to see a thoroughly debased and insincere representation of the same scene, we have only to look at the picture by Bronzino in the Uffizi at Florence. It is the picture of a mannerist, who, in painting it, can hardly have had one thought which was not contemptible so far as any religious feeling is concerned. It is full of revolting nudities, even the Christ Himself being a nude Academy model. From the ridiculous and futile demons at the top, to the naked women and children at the bottom, there is not one gleam of nobleness in it. The figures are mostly portraits, and one is the mistress of Francesco I. de' Medici. The face of the bald man whom Christ is raising by the hand wears upon it a detestable smirk. Mr. Ruskin speaks of this picture severely, but hardly too severely, when he says: "Vile as this picture is in colour, vacant in invention, void in light and shade, a heap of cumbrous nothingness, it is in all its voids most void in this, that the Academy models therein huddled together at the bottom show not so much unity or community of attention to the Academy model with the flag in its hand above, as a street crowd would do to a fresh-staged charlatan." [2] What we at once see in this picture is the degradation of Art produced by coarse and unintelligent imitations of Michael Angelo's Last Judgment. The Mannerists give us confused heaps of nude figures, coarsely realistic, and often grossly exaggerated, "which rush in and out among each other in all possible and impossible positions, over a space which would not hold a third part of them."

[1] Mrs. Heaton, 132. "This is certainly one of the finest of Dürer's woodcuts. A sort of cockatrice monster glares round the corner of the open door of Hell at Christ."

[2] *Modern Painters*, II. 53.

Of all religious subjects which could be painted, few can equal this in inherent grandeur and solemnity. The simplest painter who paints it with holy sincerity adds something to our reverence and admiration; but of such pictures as this by Bronzino, we can only say with Horace,

"Quodcunque ostendis mihi sic, incredulus odi."

Unbelief, or a purely official and artificial belief, unpurified of its gross carnality, can only disgust and offend us when it attempts to illustrate such divine and glorious themes.

Book XI.

THE RISEN CHRIST.

"Resumpta carne resurgit victor die in tertia." — *Sarum Missal* (Thursday in Easter Week).

I.

THE RESURRECTION.

"Salve festa dies, toti venerabilis ævo,
Qua Deus infernum vicit et astra tenet!
Ecce renascentis testatur gratia mundi,
Omnia cum Domino dona redisse suo."
— FORTUNATUS.

"Ben m' accors' io ch' ell era d' alta lode,
Però che a me venia: 'Risurgi e Vinci.'"
—DANTE, *Parad.* XIV. 124.

No description of the Resurrection of Christ is given by the Evangelist. The actual event was not witnessed, apparently, by the human eyes of any disciple. No details are given even in the Apocryphal Gospels, though the account in the Gospel of Nicodemus is a slight amplification of Matt. xxviii. 2.

"Therefore one of the soldiers who guarded the tomb, came, and said in the synagogue, 'Know that Jesus is risen!' The Jews said, 'How?' And he said: 'First, there was an earthquake; then an angel of the Lord, bearing lightning, came down from heaven and rolled away the stone from the sepulchre, and sat upon it. And through fear of this all we soldiers became as dead men, and could neither flee nor speak.'"

The women saw the angel, and apparently witnessed the earthquake, as did the terrified guards — a quaternion whom the Gospel of Nicodemus multiplies into 500; but we are not told that they saw Christ Himself rise from the tomb.

The pictures of the scene only vary in minor details. Jesus is almost invariably represented carrying in His

hand the Resurrection flag, with the red cross on its white ground, with which in the same Apocryphal Gospel He entered the Limbo of the Fathers. He is thus painted in the little picture by Francesco Mantegna, the son and pupil of the great Andrea, in our National Gallery.

"A mass of hollow rock fills the centre of the picture, containing a marble sarcophagus, upon the edge of which stands the risen Saviour, partly clad in a red mantle, His right hand raised in benediction, His left bearing a tall rod surmounted by a cross composed of golden balls, with a red-cross banner attached to it. On the ledge of rock below lie sleeping four soldiers, while a fifth seems to keep watch. A slender tree closes the picture to the right. The serene sky indicates advanced dawn." [1]

In an earlier picture by Orcagna (No. 578), the general details are much the same.

In Perugino's picture in the Vatican, Christ rises in a *mandorla*, and two angels are running up to adore Him on either side. By the altar-shaped tomb below, one soldier — said to be a portrait of Perugino himself — is flying; one is clutching at his sword as though in a terrified dream, and one — said to represent Raphael — is a slumbering youth.

The picture by Raffaellino del Garbo at Florence, is highly praised by Vasari. Two soldiers are asleep, and two are prostrate with terror, on one of whom the stone of the sepulchre has fallen with crushing weight.

The subject has also been treated by Rembrandt (Munich); by Sodoma (Naples); and several times by Tintoretto. His pictures of it are unsuccessful. The one in St. Cassiano is "not so much of the Resurrection as of Roman Catholic saints thinking about the Resurrection." It is strange that the painter never seemed able to conceive this subject with any power, and is marvellously hampered by various types and conventionalities. In St. Rocco his treatment is

[1] Sir F. W. Burton.

THE RISEN CHRIST. *Francesco Mantegna.*

From Picture in the National Gallery, London.

characteristic of his worst points. His impetuosity is here in the wrong place. Christ bursts out of the rock

The Resurrection. (Albrecht Dürer.)

like a thunderbolt, and the angels themselves seem likely to be crushed under the rent stones of the tomb. The

picture in San Giorgio Maggiore seems to have been chiefly painted for the sake of its portraits.[1] The picture by Lodovico Carracci in the Louvre, calls for no separate remark, nor is there any later attempt to depict the subject which has the least religious or artistic significance. The accompanying illustration is the powerful Resurrection in the "Greater Passion" of Albrecht Dürer.

[1] *Stones of Venice*, III. 290, 303, 337.

II.

"NOLI ME TANGERE."

"Gaude, plaude, Magdalena,
Tumbæ Christus exiit,
Tristis est peracta scena,
Victor mortis rediit."

— PETRUS VENERABILIS.

A PAINTING of Christ's appearance to Mary Magdalene in the garden, is called a "Noli me tangere." We have one by Titian in the National Gallery. Christ is partially dressed in white, and a hoe is (very superfluously) placed in His hand, because Mary at first supposed Him to be the gardener, although this was only before she had turned to look at Him (John xx. 16).[1] Mary is kneeling before Him. In the centre is a solitary tree, in the background some buildings on a hill; in the distance a landscape. The solemnity of the picture is derived in great measure from "the hues and harmonies of evening," in which it is bathed, and which fall over the Risen Saviour and the weeping penitent, who stretches out her hand to touch Him.

Owing to the Vulgate rendering, "*Touch me not*," the painters have always failed to observe that the true meaning of the original is quite different. The Greek words μή μου ἅπτου (John xx. 17) do not mean "*touch* me not," but rather, "cling not to me," or, more literally, "be not grasping hold of me." There is, in fact, in some

[1] The same misconception occurs in many other pictures. As in one by Giotto and one by Taddeo Gaddi (New Gallery, 1894). Even Fra Angelico puts a spade into the hand of Christ; and — as we always find the extreme of futility and exaggeration in the seventeenth century — one painter represents Him digging carrots!

manuscripts and versions a clause, "and she ran forward to grasp Him." There was nothing to forbid that Mary should *touch* Him, any more than that Thomas should touch Him, or the disciples, to whom He said, "Handle me, and see;" but the deep lesson implied was, that the bodily nearness, the *earthly* affection, the material fellowship, were vanished with the past, while the Spiritual Union had not yet begun, nor could begin till after the Ascension.

There lies, in truth, in this passage, rightly understood, a deep warning against that substitution of the material for the spiritual, of the evanescent for the permanent, of the partial for the complete, of the sentimental for the divine, which would have saved Religion as well as Art from many deadly aberrations. It might have rescued them from expending misdirected emotion on the Dead Body, when they should have been working for the living Lord; from exhausting a spasmodic sentimentality over the humiliated sufferer, when they should have been obeying the Eternal King. Art has followed Religion in the tendency to stimulate the luxury of an erring and self-cherished grief, when she should have fostered the self-control, the natural sincerity, the vigorous service, the glad enthusiasm, the radiant and active zeal, for which tears and self-maceration are the most miserable of substitutes. And thus, Religion and Art alike tended to give us idols for God, and hysterics for duties, and to set before us a Christ, either wrathful, repellent, and anathematizing, or narrow and sectarian, or effeminate and pietistic, or morose and exacting, or morbid and torture-loving, for Him who went about doing good, who came eating and drinking, who was the friend of publicans and sinners, and who compared His own preaching of the Gospel to that of the glad children in the market-place, crying to their sullen comrades, "We have piped unto you and ye have not danced."

We see, then, that at the infinitely solemn moment of His earliest appearance, Christ gave the warning to His

Church not to confound His bodily form with His real Presence. Mary was yearning for the Human Jesus; He pointed her to the Divine Christ. It was as though He said it is not by the outward sense that I can henceforth be apprehended, but spiritually and in the heart alone. The old earthly life is over, the New Glory has not yet begun. When the Ascension had taken place, it was to inaugurate the new era in which physical contact was to be superseded by the loftier intercourse and deeper nearness of spiritual indwelling. The disappearance of the mortal body was the sole possible condition of the abiding Presence of the Eternal Spirit.

Painters, ill-taught by an erring Church, wholly failed to observe these truths, and their pictures of the first appearance of the Risen Christ to the penitent sinner, have for the most part but little meaning. One picture, however, in the National Gallery, by Francesco Mantegna (No. 639) is interesting for its incidental symbolism. A vine, rich with purple clusters, hangs over the figure of Christ, to indicate His words, "I am the true Vine." It is supported on a dead tree, the emblem of the dry and withered stock of Judaism. On one side a bird defends its nest against a serpent; on the other is a bee-hive.[1]

[1] In a Virgin and Child by Bassano (N. G. 599), there is an eagle on a dead tree watching a contest between a stork and a snake.

III.

THE SUPPER AT EMMAUS.

"He bless'd the bread, but vanish'd at the word,
And left them both exclaiming, 'T was the Lord!'
Did not our hearts feel all He deign'd to say?
Did they not burn within us by the way?"

— COWPER.

No scene in the Gospel records of the Risen Christ has been more popular in Art than the supper with the two disciples at Emmaus.

The picture of this scene by Bellini is in the Church of San Salvador at Venice. It is chiefly remarkable for the grandeur given to the head of Christ, which makes Burckhardt call it "one of the first pictures in Italy." It is now assigned by some critics to Carpaccio. Marziale's *Emmaus* is in the Academy. The Venetian School generally (*e.g.*, Titian and Palma Vecchio) treated the subject in a somewhat genre-like manner, amid earthly and commonplace surroundings, but without the insolent and burlesquely vulgar realism of Honthorst in the Manfrini gallery, or of Caravaggio in our own.

Of the later Venetian masters of the school of Titian, few certainly are more powerful or more interesting than Bonifazio. He often combines the form and colouring of Titian with a *motif*, or with accessories, in which Paolo Veronese would have delighted. These characteristics are illustrated by his *Supper at Emmaus* in the Brera. The figure of the Christ is conventional, and this is the point in which so many painters conspicuously fail. But the rest of the picture is delightful, though it has no connexion with the sacred scene, except that outside the Inn

is a sketch of Christ walking with the two disciples. As Christ breaks the bread, the disciple on the right outspreads his hands in surprise, while the other has started up from his seat. A youth at the left is pouring out wine, and by his side stands the stout landlord. On the other side is seen the kitchen, and on a wooden platform stands a boy in a blue cap, with a white feather in it, looking on. In the left-hand corner of the picture is a most accidental accessory. A sweet child, in a short white tunic and red sash, is seated on a green cloth on the floor taking his simple supper of bread and cherries, and a little wine, which lies beside him on a ledge. Having ended his meal, he is holding out a bunch of cherries with charming naïveté to a little white dog, who naturally rejects the offering, with a look of offended dignity. This would make an innocent little picture by itself, but is singularly out of place in a serious endeavour to bring before us the scene of that solemn eventide.

Moretto's *Supper at Emmaus* is a fresco in the Tosi collection at Brescia. In this picture the Christ wears a pilgrim's hat of grey, and a cockle shell, of which the brim shades His forehead. There is a look of amazement on the features of the disciples, as He breaks the bread. One of them, leaning his head on his hand, gazes intently into the Saviour's face, which is calm and lofty in expression. An indescribable flash of recognition is beginning to break over the countenance of the other. A girl carries a dish, and the host is going down a flight of steps. A cat sits under the table.

In Titian's *Supper at Emmaus* there is little to teach or elevate us. We are chiefly interested in the tradition that the disciple on the right, with the pilgrim's hat, is said to be a portrait of Cardinal Ximenes; the other, of Ferdinand the Catholic; the host, of Charles V.; and the page, of Philip II.

Romanino's picture of the *Disciples at Emmaus* hangs close beside that of Moretto. Except the two disciples

on whose faces the gleam of recognition has just begun to dawn, no one is present but the youth who is serving. He wears a crimson cap with a white feather, and there is a touch of Romanino's fantastic cleverness in the way in which — conscious that *something* is taking place — the boy turns half round to look at Christ with a corner of his eye. In a coigne of vantage in the humble room a swallow is sitting on her nest. A simple pitcher and cup stand at the left-hand corner. Only at Brescia can one form an adequate estimate of the two glorious painters, Moretto and Romanino. Of the two, Romanino had more fascination and superficial cleverness but in deeper qualities he was no match for his friendly rival in their "gay duel of Art."

Caravaggio's treatment of this subject is a specimen of the coarsest and most vulgar realism. There is not a touch of sacredness or devotion about it. The thing we first notice is the obtrusive roast chicken on the table. Caravaggio — "the ruffian Caravaggio," as Mr. Ruskin calls him — is the Zola of decadent Art.[1]

[1] Symonds, *Renaissance*, VII. 389. In the National Gallery is a picture by Altobello Melone (a Cremonese painter), of Christ walking with the disciples on the road to Emmaus. The subject was painted by Titian, 1547. There is a picture of it by Rembrandt at the Louvre, and by Rubens at Madrid.

IV.

THE INCREDULITY OF ST. THOMAS.

Μὴ γίνου ἄπιστος ἀλλὰ πιστός. — JOHN XX. 27.

THE Incredulity of St. Thomas forms the subject of a superb group in bronze, by Andrea Verrocchio, in the Church of San Michele, Florence. The majestic Risen Saviour is drawing aside His robe with His left hand, while He raises His right arm in appeal. The Apostle, a very noble figure, gazes at the wound in the side with deep reverence, and holds back the robe with his right hand, that he may see it clearly.

Duccio's painting of the Incredulity of St. Thomas in Siena, is astonishingly fine and beautiful. "The way in which he expresses the doubt and hesitation of Thomas," says Mr. Cole, "is something wonderful. Notice his wavering action — how the left foot goes forward as he goes towards the wall; his timidity as he dares to put his finger into the wound of Christ. Then look at Christ, His calm dignity and mild, reproving manner, His sweetly benignant aspect, and the majesty of His figure with the arm uplifted. There is a gentle, kind, pitiful look in His face." The folds of the dress are illuminated by lines of gold by Duccio, in the Byzantine manner, but only *after the Resurrection*, as though to indicate His glorified body.[1]

Cima da Conegliano's Incredulity of St. Thomas in our Gallery (No. 816), is a composition of twelve figures

[1] It is beautifully reproduced by Mr. Cole in Stedman's *Old Italian Masters*, p. 21.

painted in 1504 as an altarpiece for a church near Conegliano. It has the serious dignity and expressiveness which mark Cima's other works. He has another picture of this subject in the Academy of Venice.

There is a painting of the scene by Paolo Cavazzola, a pupil of Morone, in the Gallery at Verona which has considerable merit. The Christ carries the Resurrection flag, and is gentle and dignified. The Apostle kneels in reverence, and while he gazes earnestly on the wound in the side, which he timidly touches, his left hand is opened in astonishment. On one side, in the distance, is the Ascension; on the other, the Descent of the Holy Ghost. The scene has also been handled by Rembrandt, Guercino, and Overbeck.[1]

[1] St. Thomas is frequently introduced in Assumptions of the Virgin. She was supposed to have presented to him her girdle.

V.

THE ASCENSION.

"Sicut umbra, sicut fumus,
Sicut foenum facti sumus:
Miserere Rex cœlorum,
Miserere miserorum."

— MARBOD.

I SHOULD rank "The Ascension" among the subjects which it would have been much wiser to leave unpainted, or, at any rate, to paint only in a purely symbolic manner.

I do not think that there is anything in the Gospels which sanctions the conception that Christ rose before the eyes of the Apostles slowly and visibly through the air, or through the clouds. If He did so, it is at any rate certain that neither the Evangelists nor the Apostles say one word which justifies our imaginations in dwelling on the *physical details* of the occurrence.

It is not even mentioned by St. Matthew.

In the Gospel of St. Mark it is only referred to in the words, "He was taken into heaven" (*ἀνελήφθη εἰς τὸν οὐρανόν*). This single phrase occurs in the last twelve verses (Mark xvi. 9–20), which, though canonical, are of dubious authenticity, and have recently been assigned, with strong probability, to Aristion. But here, while the great Christian verity is stated that Christ — using such language as alone our infirmity can apprehend — was "taken up into heaven," it is not said that the Apostles watched the visible ascent. Nor, again, is this stated by St. Luke; on the contrary, he seems most distinctly to imply that the Ascension of the glorified body was not actually witnessed by the Apostles, for he says (xxiv. 50)

that Jesus led them out as far as towards Bethany, and there lifted up His hands and blessed them, and in the act of blessing them stood apart from them (*διέστη ἀπ' αὐτῶν*). The following words, "and was carried up into heaven," are omitted in some manuscripts so ancient as the Sinaitic and the Codex Bezæ, and are regarded as an interpolation by Griesbach and Tischendorf. But while the fact of His evanishment was certain, and they stood gazing into heaven during His passage thither, St. Luke describes the event itself as instantaneous (Acts i. 9, *ἐπήρθη*), and tells us that "a cloud at once received Him (*ὑπέλαβεν*) from their eyes." It is doubtful, therefore, whether the Scripture indications of the *manner*, apart from the *fact*, of Christ's Ascension, warrant its material delineation otherwise than by such symbols and emblems as those used by the early Christians in the Catacombs.

The Ascension was painted by Giotto in the Arena Chapel, and by Correggio in the Church of S. Giovanni Evangelista at Parma.

The famous Ascension by Perugino is at Lyons. The chief peculiarity is that the ascending figure of Christ is encircled by a wreath of cherub-heads. When painters began to handle the subject at all, they were naturally led to surround it with the minstrelsies and ministrations of angels, although the Scriptures, which tell us how the denizens of heaven sang at His birth, do not tell us that they were seen around Him by mortal eyes, or heard by human ears, as the everlasting doors lifted up their heads to let the King of Glory in.

Tintoret's Ascension in the Scuola di San Rocco is as little satisfactory as those of others. The figure of Christ is entirely inadequate. He is supported by angels in the air, but Tintoret seems to have been more occupied in the various details of his picture than in the truths which he meant to indicate.

We have no painting of the Ascension in the National Gallery. It is not by any means one of the more frequent

subjects. Rosini, among the numerous illustrations in his six volumes of the *Storia della Pittura Italiana*, does not give us a single specimen. Even the irreverent familiarities of the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries were awed by this transcendent mystery, which gave them no scope for the vulgar realism in which too many of them so greatly delighted.

The main thought involved for Christians in the Ascension is, that Christ has forever taken into the Godhead the form of Manhood, there to remain in the heavens through all eternity, to make intercession for us.

'Tis the weakness in strength that I cry for! my flesh that I seek
In the Godhead! I seek and I find it! Oh Saul, it shall be
A Face like my face that receives thee; a Man like to me
Thou shalt love, and be loved by for ever; a Hand like this hand
Shall throw open the gate of new Life to thee! See the Christ stand!

Book XII.

THE LAST JUDGMENT.

"Judicabit omnes gentes,
Et salvabit innocentes.
Dies illa, dies vitae,
Dies lucis inauditae,
Qua nox omnis destruetur,
Et mors ipsa morietur!"

—S. Petr. Damiani.

THE LAST JUDGMENT.

"Oh thoughts that tempt us, idle, sweet, and vain,
Where are ye when a double death draws near,
One sure, one threatening, an eternal loss?"

— MICHAEL ANGELO.

"Multitudes — multitudes — stood up in bliss,
Made equal to the angels, glorious, fair,
With harps, palms, wedding garments, kiss of peace,
And crowns of haloed hair.
. . . . . .
"Glory touched glory on each blessed head,
Hands locked dear hands never to sunder more;
These were the new-begotten from the dead,
Whom the great Birthday bore."

— CHRISTINA ROSSETTI.

I.

ORCAGNA AND OTHERS.

"THE Last Judgment" was a subject which, more than any other, tested the highest powers of a painter's imagination. But for well-understood traditional elements of treatment, few would have had the courage to attempt it at all. Their attempts are largely influenced by theological prepossessions, and of these, many are partial and erroneous. They obscure, rather than illustrate, any imaginative effort to realize that tremendous scene. The great painting of the Last Judgment by Orcagna († 1385) in the Campo Santo, still continues to be one of the most memorable forms in which the subject has been treated. It exercised a deep influence over the thoughts of the Middle Ages. It is, in reality, a pitiless, concrete illustration of the terrible words, "too late." In this respect — in the

total alienation of Christ's attention from the Blessed to the Lost—it is more severe than the Last Judgment of Giotto in Sta Maria Novella, and diverges for the worse from the old Byzantine pictures in the Cathedral of Torcello, as well as from the Byzantine Manual of Panselinos, written for the painters of Mount Athos. It shows the gradual triumph of terror and of gloom.[1]

At the top of the picture, in separate *mandorlas* of glory, and with nimbuses which flash on every side, are seated Christ and the Virgin. The Virgin wears a regal crown, under which flows the veil which shrouds her hair and encloses her features. Her left hand is laid upon her breast, her expression is one of deep sorrow as with half-averted glance she looks downward towards the lost. Christ, in splendid regal adornment, and with His brows encircled by a crown-tiara, uplifts His right hand in a gesture of condemnation, while His left hand points to His wounded side. His expression is stern. On either side fly three angels carrying the cross, the scourges, the crown of thorns, and the other instruments of the Passion. Beneath, in two rows, sit the Twelve Apostles, St. Peter with his keys being immediately at the Virgin's right.[2]

Immediately beneath the Divine aureoles is a mighty angel who holds in either hand a scroll, inscribed with *Venite Benedicti Patris*, and *Ite Maledicti*. On either side of him is an angel with a long trumpet, and another is seated on the clouds at his feet. He seems to have just turned his back upon the lost, and has half hidden his face with his hand as he shrinks from the frightful spectacle. These angels by their position form a cross in heaven.

On the left side of the picture in five rows, one beneath the other, are the ranks of the Blessed, among whom are

[1] See E. Dobbert (in Dohme's Series); Orcagna, p. 73. Förster and others express doubts as to this being the actual work of Orcagna, see p. xix, note.

[2] The arrangement was more or less borrowed by Fra Bartolommeo and Raphael. The gesture of Christ, but with less of menace, and the attitude of the Virgin, are copied by Fra Angelico, and with exaggerated violence by Michael Angelo.

THE LAST JUDGMENT. *Orcagna.*

From the Picture in the Campo Santo, Pisa.

human beings of all conditions, kings, popes, bishops, monks, nuns, burghers, old and young.

On the other side are the lost who are being driven and pushed by ruthless angels, with gestures of violence and scorn, into the flames which burst from the mountain side of hell. Just above their heads a devilish monster is breathing fire. From out of the flames come the hands and crooks of demons. A queen tries to free her robes from the clutch of a younger female who is clinging to her, but the fierce grasp of the evil spirits plucks her back. Next to her another queen is wringing her hands. A nun veils her shamed face with both palms. Many express their utter despair by look and action. Some glance back with fruitless repentance.

Under the four central angels stands the Archangel Michael with his sword. By a sweep of his arm he points out to another angel that the youth whom he is holding by the hand is to be led into the ranks of the saved. Opposite, a monk has tried to join the blessed ones, but an angel drags him by the hair of the head towards the jaws of hell. Between these groups, in the hindmost of the long lines of symmetrical graves, rises the figure of King Solomon, and he seems not a little uncertain whether he belongs to those on the Saviour's right or those on the left; for the Middle Ages were familiar with the discussion whether the wise King was saved or lost. Dante, indeed, places him in glory, but others looked upon his salvation as highly dubious.

One side of the picture is occupied by the monstrous hell of mediæval fancy. It is represented in all its cruel and brutal realism, a slaughter-house of everlasting vivisection, a reeking hot-bed of abhorrent atrocities, in every sense of the word revolting and abominable. Dante, by his *Inferno*, meant, not to paint a realistic picture of the actual, but (as he himself explained it to us) to picture the inherent nature of sin as it is. Orcagna takes all the horrors of hell in their most literal sense of physical

and endless torture, and paints Lucifer in the midst as a grotesquely execrable monster, breathing flame from every limb. The place which would have been occupied by the corresponding Paradise is now filled by the scenes from the Lives of the Hermits. Otherwise the Campo Santo would have presented us the "four last things" — Death, Judgment, Hell, and Paradise.

In the now destroyed pictures in Sta Croce many of the figures were, according to Vasari, portraits. Orcagna dealt with his contemporaries as Dante did with his. He put Clement VI. and the Physician Dino del Garbo in Paradise. He thrust into Hell some of his enemies, and the legal personages who had taken part against him in a trial. Orcagna painted the same subject in the Strozzi Chapel of Sta Maria Novella.

I have already alluded to Giotto's Last Judgment (A.D. 1305) in the Arena Chapel. Fra Angelico painted the Last Judgment more than once. As always, he failed in grandeur, but he excelled all in infinite sweetness. No one has ever equalled the "soft, angelic tenderness" and the ineffable bliss of the beatific vision, which breathes in the faces of the elect to whom his own soul was akin. His Last Judgment in the Academy at Florence is, as Rio truly says, the work of one who began as a miniaturist, and "the almost imperceptible angels which float around the Saviour are far superior, as regards finish and execution, to the Prophets and Apostles." Angelico had been influenced by the mighty work of Orcagna. He borrows the incident of the hypocrite being dragged by an angel out of the ranks of the blessed. But his nature was gentler than his theology. He cannot paint a wrathful Christ, though no one could paint so well a Christ whose face was full of love as is the charming lunette in the Cloister of San Marco of Christ meeting two young Dominican monks. Nor could he paint the torments of the damned, or the hideousness of devils. When he attempts it he becomes childish and grotesque. In the

Last Judgment of the Academy he left his brother Benedetto to paint the Inferno of the Lost, after the manner of the Campo Santo. But, as Lord Lindsay says, "the very spirit of Paradise illuminates the opposite angle, where the elect are assembled in their beatitude, some basking, as it were, in the benign glance of Christ" — for He turns to look on *them* as they outstretch towards Him their enraptured gestures, and not towards the cursed — "others ascending, heralded by angels, who weave a dance of mystic harmony around them, towards the gates of the Celestial City, whence a flood of light streams down upon them, in which the two foremost, floating buoyantly upwards from earth, are already transfigured. One almost fancies one hears 'the bells ringing, and the trumpets sounding melodiously, within the golden gates,' as if Heaven itself were coming down to meet them in the jubilee of welcome."

Luca Signorelli's Last Judgment is a magnificent work in the Cathedral at Orvieto. In skill and power it can hardly be surpassed, and it evidently exercised considerable influence over Michael Angelo. In the sky on the right stand three archangels, of whom the midmost wears a winged helmet, and is looking down with a gesture of grief and repulsion on the tangled and tumultuous multitudes of the damned. The other two are drawing their swords, and have so terrified a demon that he has loosed his hold of a lost spirit who, with two others, is tumbling headlong downwards in attitudes full of horror. Midway in the sky a hideous demon has seized a woman whose dishevelled hair streams on the wind, towards whom he turns with an execrably gloating look. It is needless to dwell on the mighty but loathly realism of the manifold tortures which demons are inflicting on the lost below. Could Signorelli, could any human being keep his senses and yet believe that these insufferable horrors of cruelty could be inflicted, and could go on forever and forever more, and yet that God could be God? Could they believe that the Lord Christ had died so utterly in vain?

Fra Bartolommeo painted the Last Judgment in Sta Maria Nuova a few months before he became a monk, (A.D. 1498).[1] Though the original has suffered, and the lower part of the picture is mainly the work of Mariotto Albertinelli, it is full of interest, dignity, and repose. Christ occupies the centre of the picture at the top, in a glory surrounded by Cherubim and Seraphim. The little angels below are holding the minor instruments of the passion, but in perfect gentleness, and not as though they were wrathfully demanding justice. The face and attitude of the Saviour, though stern, is yet sad and pitiful. The picture derives additional interest from its portrait of Fra Angelico, who is at Christ's right hand, and is looking downward. Christ is seated on the clouds. His right hand is uplifted; His left is on the spear-wound — on both hands the nail-prints are prominent. Beneath Him, in a nun-like dress, with hands folded in prayer, sits the Virgin, and on either side in calm majesty the Twelve Apostles, of whom St. Peter, the most prominent, is gazing downward with compassion. Underneath the Saviour is a great angel with the cross, the lance, and the crown of thorns. In the lower part of the picture the Archangel Michael with his sword separates the Risen Just from the Lost. The dignity and repose of the picture offers a singular contrast to the tumultuous fury of that of Michael Angelo, but produces a far deeper and holier effect upon the mind.

II.

MICHAEL ANGELO.

"Ma è terribile, come tu vedi, non si pol praticar con lui." Pope Julius II. of Michael Angelo (quoted in the letter of Sebastian del Piombo to Michael Angelo, October 15, 1512).

When we speak of the Last Judgment in Art, our thoughts can never be far distant from the stupendous

[1] Woltmann and Woermann, II. 232.

work of Michael Angelo in the Sistine Chapel (A.D. 1541). In its present condition, defaced by repainting, and blackened by the smoke of candles and incense, and the accumulated dust of more than three centuries, it is very difficult to judge of it as a painting. But its whole

The Last Judgment. (Michael Angelo.)

idea is but too easily understood, and it may be well studied in detail in a fine reduced ancient copy of it by Marcello Venusti, now in the Museo Borbonico at Naples.[1]

[1] On this great work, see Anton Springer (Dohme, II. 421–432); Lord Lindsay, III. 139–146; Lanzi, I. 141.

Into this picture the mighty painter poured all the strength, despair, and agitation of his troubled soul, and there are in existence more than fifty sketches and designs in pen and ink, and in crayon and red chalk, which are obvious studies for the composition and its details. It occupied eight years in its completion, and was unveiled by Michael Angelo — not very appropriately — on Christmas Day, 1541, "for the amazement of Rome and the world."[1] Yet even in the painter's lifetime it was remorselessly handled. During its progress the Papal Master of the Ceremonies, Biagio da Cesena, expressed the opinion of many of the "unco guid" when he described it as more fit for a pothouse than for a Chapel, and Michael Angelo, like Leonardo da Vinci in his Last Supper, is said to have taken a somewhat ignoble revenge, by introducing the likeness of Biagio in the half-Pagan figure of Minos. Less sincere, and springing from baser motives than the criticism of Biagio, was that of the shameless Pietro Aretino. Before he had seen the picture he had the impudence to write to Michael Angelo his conception of what it was, or should be, in hollow and pompous rhetoric; and he did this that he might play upon the painter's good nature, and get a picture out of him, as he had done from Titian and many other artists. But Michael Angelo probably saw through him, and at any rate only paid him back in his own tinsel-clink of compliments, through which the cunning sycophant probably read the underlying scorn. "Why," he asked, "do you not reward my attachment with some fragment of the leaves to which you attach little value? I value two strokes of yours with charcoal on paper more highly than all the goblets and chains with which any Prince has honoured me." For some years, Aretino, vainly hoping for a present, continued to praise "the divine Michael Angelo" and the Last Judgment, but when he found

[1] Three frescoes of Perugino, and two lunettes by Michael Angelo himself, were destroyed to make room for it.

that little or nothing was to be got out of him, he wrote him an abusive and dictatorial letter, pretending to blush at the nudities of the picture as though they would have been a discredit even to a Pagan. He told him that his picture would have been more suitable for a public bath. In another letter he hinted that such a picture could only have risen from secret inclinations to the heresy of the Lutherans; and this insinuation, through his influence, found its way into Ludovico Dolce's dialogue on Art, written to exalt Titian.

Paul IV., the narrow-minded Caraffa Pope who headed the Catholic Revival, also took alarm, and was only prevented from destroying the whole picture by the influence of Cardinals and artists. "Tell his holiness," said Michael Angelo, "that this is a small matter, easily mended. Let him amend the world; pictures can be easily amended." To Daniele da Volterra was assigned the thankless task of adding draperies to Michael Angelo's figures, and repainting St. Catherine and St. Blaise. Hence, among his witty countrymen, Daniele got his nickname of *Il brachettone*, "the breeches-maker."

And yet — without any Philistinism — there is surely much to regret in this vast picture. Its effect on Art, which it misled into violent exaggerations of tempestuous passions and foreshortened nudity, was ruinously evil.[1]

It reveals the grim earnestness and sense of horror in the painter's soul, and shews what is meant when artists spoke of his *terribiltà*. It is the *tremenda Dies Judicii* — the *Dies iræ* — Wrath and Terror reign throughout it. The angels who carry the instruments of the cross and passion do so as claimants for vengeance; those who cower in the middle of the picture half cover their faces with

[1] The nude was absolutely forbidden to Spanish painters. Pacheco tells a story of a Bishop who experienced such sensations at a nude figure in a Last Judgment of Martin de Vos (now in the Museum at Seville), that he declared he would rather face a hurricane in the Bay of Biscay than see it again (*Arte de la Pintura*, 201. Sir W. Maxwell Sterling, I. 20).

their robes. Vittoria Colonna — whom Angelo loved with so romantic and platonic an attachment — defended his standpoint by speaking of the *Two* Future Advents of Christ — of which one should be an Advent of Love, the other of Wrath, when the time for compassion should be no more. But defend the picture as we will, — and making every possible allowance for the standpoint of the painter and of the age, and of traditional Catholicism as reflected on the canvas of many previous artists,[1] and centuries earlier in the *Inferno* of Dante, — surely there was in this picture very much to be deplored.

Let us try briefly to describe it.

It brings together in one scene all the Last Things.

The Apostles, seated on the clouds, sit like the choir of some dread tragedy, in symmetrical rows on either side, they alone undisturbed by the awful tumult.[2] The angels, with their trumpets, are waking the dead to judgment, and the good angels, and the spirits of the just made perfect, take part in the scene as well as the demons and the lost. The nudity of the figures bringing the bodies more into prominence than the heads, and the expression of the faces, adds to the weird and sculpturesque effect.

Christ, as Judge, is the central point of the picture. But what a Christ! A nude, wrathful Giant, without one touch of mercy or pity in Him! His attitude is borrowed from Orcagna, but, whereas, in Orcagna, He shows His bleeding hand, and points to His wounded side, here

[1] Anton Springer (in Dohme's *Kunst und Künstler*, II. 424) mentions the work of an eleventh century painter in the Church of St. Angelo at Capua, and the mosaic of Andrea Tafi in the Florence Baptistery. M. Angelo had been also preceded by Giotto in the Arena Chapel; Orcagna in the Sta Maria Novella of Florence and in the Pisan Campo Santo; Fra Angelico frequently (but, as we have seen, in a very different manner); Fra Bartolommeo in Sta Maria Nuova; and (not to mention many others) Luca Signorelli in the Cathedral of Orvieto. Many of these pictures Michael Angelo may have seen, and he certainly had seen that in the Campo Santo.

[2] See Springer, I. c. 425, 599.

He looks down upon the damned — whom He is hurling into darkness as a crushed, agonized, demon-tortured rain-storm of ruined humanity — with His left hand pointed indeed towards the spear wound, but assuming at the same time a sweeping gesture of inexorable rejection. His muscular right arm, convulsed with passion, is uplifted, as though at once to drive away and to smite. He is just rising from His seat, and in the next moment will stand terrifically upright. The Virgin — one of the few figures which is not nude — shrinks terrified under the protection of His arm, grasping at her veil as though to hide features which are full of despair and anguish, and seeming to shrink into herself and turn away from the dreadful scene.

Upon the clouds immediately beneath the feet of Christ, are St. Laurence, with his gridiron, looking utterly afraid, and St. Bartholomew shewing to Christ the knife of his martyrdom, and hideously holding in his left hand his own skin — head and all. The emblems of their murder, like those of Christ's Crucifixion, are not appeals for mercy, but for vengeance, as are the emblems of martyrdom displayed also by St. Catherine, St. Blaise, and other saints.

It is impossible to describe all the mighty episodes with which the rest of the picture abounds. Even the blessed, instead of rising with the peace which Fra Angelico knew so well how to paint, are swept away by a stormy emotion. Adam looks at Christ in awestruck alarm, and Eve half shrinks behind him in despair.

One maiden, though she rises into heaven's bliss, is so terrified at the hurricane of wrath that she hides her face in her mother's breast. The saved are on the right of the Seven Angels of Judgment with their trumpets, and the damned upon the left. Very frightful are the bestial demons who drag their prey into hell. The lost express their despair and anguish by every conceivable attitude and expression, covering their faces, wringing their hands,

cowering and crouching with trembling horror. They are hovering in two groups, of which the one, driven back forcibly by fighting angels and dragged downwards by devils, forms a grand Titanic scene. Many of them are being hurled head-downwards into the abyss. There is a deep lesson in one mighty figure. A powerful demon has grasped him by the legs and is bearing him to Acheron, while another drives into his thigh his fearful serpent-fangs; but the lost wretch heeds not and feels not the physical anguish. His shoulders are raised, his head is sunk on his hand in a despair which is more overwhelming than pain or horror.

At the bottom of the picture we see on one side the resurrection of the dead in its most materialized conception. On the other side is Acheron and the under-world. The demons are tormenting their victims, and the awful figure of the demon Charon, with his blazing eyes, long ears, and taloned feet, is beating, with his upraised oar, the crowded masses of his miserable passengers, at whom devils are hacking, in their eagerness to begin the hellish orgy of never-ending vivisection. At the corner of the picture is Minos, who, as in Dante, has a serpent's tail, and is surrounded by devils unsurpassed in hatefulness. It is the work of a man who has long severed himself from all ecclesiastical types of ordinary religious feeling, and who only revels in the Promethean pleasure of calling into existence all the capabilities of movement, position, foreshortening, and grouping of the human form. Everything is sacrificed to the exigencies of the nude.

Such is this colossal, stupendous, but almost revolting picture, — shall we say a fearful poem, or a horrible nightmare in colour? It is a work of genius as great in its way as Dante's *Inferno*, but without Dante's lofty and noble elements; and, unlike Dante, Michael Angelo either conveys no lesson at all, or only a lesson which we repudiate with amazed disgust. Michael Angelo was a poet, and could pour forth his burning passion of platonic love

for a Vittoria Colonna or a Tommaso de' Cavalieri, but his poetry in this picture is the poetry as of a midnight thunder-storm, in which there are no elements of loveliness, but only of fright and ruin.

"Tell him," — such was the message which he scornfully sent to the Duke of Urbino, who had accused him of falsehood and dishonesty, — "tell him that he has fashioned a Michael Angelo out of the materials he found in his own heart." Alas! the mighty artist has also fashioned himself out of some of the darkest and stormiest elements which he had suffered to find their home in his own perturbed individuality.

Lonely, gloomy, scornful, wayward, brooding on awful thoughts, lacerated by an ever present sense of indignation, Michael Angelo was what the religion of his age, together with abhorrence of its baseness and frivolity, had made him. Everything which he did, and said, and wrote, and created, shews his storm-swept spirit. In many respects he resembles Dante in his haughty bitterness and suppressed intensity of passion, but he lacked the radiance and serenity of Dante's happier moods. In him the carnality and classicism of the Renaissance were struggling with tremendous moral convictions and spiritual beliefs. Circumstances had created in his character a morbid element. Poor, yet of patrician birth, his youth was spent in a city distracted by political turbulence in an epoch of moral decadence. It is not impossible that he, like Byron, may have been morbidly affected by the personal disfigurement which he owed, in early youth, to the brutal fist of his rival Torregiano. He expresses his own character in the famous lines on his statue of Night.[1]

> Caro m' è il sonno e più l' esser di sasso,
> Mentre che il danno e la vergogna dura,
> Non veder, non sentír m' é' gran ventura;
> Però non mi destar; deh, parla basso!

[1] Springer, in Dohme, II. 460.

In one of Sebastian del Piombo's letters he tells Michael Angelo his remark to the Pope Julius II., that he (Sebastian) could work miracles if Buonarotti helped him. "Of that I have no doubt," said the Pope. "You all learnt from him. Look at the work of Raphael, who no sooner saw Michael Angelo than he substituted his manner for that of Perugino. But Michael Angelo is an awful man, and hard to deal with, as you know! . . . I said," continues Sebastian, "that your awfulness (*terribiltà*) did no harm to any one, and that you only seemed so from love of the great work you had in hand!" We are sorry, however, to find in this letter strong traces of artistic jealousy. It is said that Angelo once saw Raphael and his gay scholars trooping up the steps of the Vatican, and compared them to the bailiff and his myrmidons going to seize a prisoner. "There's the executioner!" said Raphael, pretending to shrink back. It is characteristic of Michael Angelo that landscape seems to have had no interest for him. It has well been said of him that "his imagination created a race of beings foreign to and outside nature, and if Leonardo's landscape seems to us so strange that it might belong to another planet, so most certainly might we think of Buonarotti's mighty incarnations. He might have brought them, shall we say from far-off, solitary Saturn, reached by him alone of men, a dim, enormous world. How was it possible to make such creatures at home among green fields, trees, rivers, and bridges? He never attempted it. In the Holy Family of the Uffizi, his only condescension of the kind, there is something of a landscape, but it is depicted in simple blues, only rock and soil, hardly so much as a bush — just air and solitude!" [1]

We have seen that Angelo's character had points of analogy with those of Dante and of Byron. In many respects also he resembled Carlyle, though Carlyle was incomparably inferior to him in genius, perhaps also in lofty nobleness of character. Just as Carlyle could hardly

[1] Gilbert, p. 252.

speak of servants without calling them sluts or flunkeys, or worse, so Michael Angelo, worried by his maids, said, *Sono tutte puttane e porche.* Yet his servant Urbino lived twenty-five years with him, and Michael Angelo was almost heartbroken at his death. He seems to have been very fond of his nephew, but wrote him intolerably cross and trying letters, and on one occasion thunders at him, "Where have you learnt to write? The mere sight of your letters gives me the fever." Like Carlyle, he must have been "gey ill to live with." He found it very hard to keep up even the semblance of any faith in human nature. Donato Gianotti tells us how on one occasion some friends met him coming down from the Capitol, and as they walked with him recited some passages of the *Divine Comedy.* They then invited him to a dinner, after which there was to be dancing and music. "How can you think of dancing?" he said. "This is a world of tears. If a man would not be lost, instead of giving himself up to pleasure, he should think of death." His feelings must often have been those of Luther in his early period of "*Sturm und Drang.*" Luther tells us how on one occasion he perspired at every pore, and felt almost as if he should fall down dead with terror at the sight of the Holy Sacrament. But Dr. Staupitz said to him, "Thy thoughts are not according to Christ. Christ does not terrify; He consoles." "Those words," said Luther, "filled me with joy, and were a great relief to my mind." If those words could have come home to the soul of Michael Angelo, he would never have painted the Sistine Last Judgment. But there was no Staupitz to speak them to him. His life threw him into contact with a furious Pope like Julius II., and a loathly libertine like Aretino, who walked about in a cloak of infamy, "doubly lined with the fox-fur of hypocrisy." "If a man's religion be night, where is the day?" "If God is a bugbear, what is life?"

All Michael Angelo's paintings are the grandiose paint-

ings of one who was essentially a sculptor, and who despised easel pictures as only fit for idle people. His genius was hardly less versatile than that of Leonardo, for he was also a poet, and an architect. There is something sublime and colossal in all his works. His awful statue of Moses at Rome, and his tomb of Guiliano de' Medici at Florence, shew the supremest grandeur of which sculpture is capable. His cartoon of Pisan soldiers bathing in the Arno and surprised by Florentines, was painted in competition with Leonardo, and Vasari calls the two cartoons "the school of the world." But his study of anatomy perverted his art into false directions, and the Caraffa Pope, Paul IV., was more than half right in condemning as irreligious the colossal nudities of the Last Judgment, though he was happily overruled in 1558, in his intention to destroy it altogether. Masaccio, Ghirlandajo, Piero dei Franceschi, and most of all, Luca Signorelli, were Angelo's predecessors in the anatomical exhibition of the nude, though none of them equalled him in gloomy and terrific naturalism, which resulted from the depth of his feelings and the strength of his passions. Even in his own lifetime there were some who foresaw how fatal would be his influence on Art. Dr. Gaye, in his *Carteggio*, quotes an anonymous writer, who, in 1549, called Michael Angelo Buonarotti, "that inventor of filthy trash (*inventor delle porcherie*) who adheres to his art without devotion. Indeed, all the modern painters and sculptors, following the like Lutheran (*i.e.*, impious) caprices, now-a-days, neither paint nor model for consecrated churches anything but figures which distract our faith and devotion; but I hope that God will one day send His saints to cast down such idolatries." Yet when we look at the dirty, revolting devotees of the Spanish schools, who painted under the black dominance of the Inquisition, "we see that if the Paganism of the Medici and Michael Angelo scared away the seraphic visions of monastic tameness, it also rescued Italy from re-

ligious prudery, and saved men from addressing their orisons to squalid beggary." [1] Fuseli ventures to criticise with severity even the famous Moses, in which he says, "Michael Angelo has sacrificed beauty to anatomical science and to his favourite passion for the terrific and gigantic. If he took the arm from the famous Ludovisi satyr, he was also influenced by the head, for both of them resemble that of an he-goat. There is, notwithstanding, in the figure a character of monstrous grandeur, which, like a thunder-storm, presaged the bright days of Raphael."

In one of Michael Angelo's own noble sonnets, it seems as if he became conscious of something which he had lost. Towards the close of his life he wrote: —

"Now my fair bark through life's tempestuous flood
Is steered, and full in view that port is seen,
Where all must answer what their course has been,
And every work be tried, if bad or good;
Now do those lofty dreams, my fancy's brood,
Which made of Art an idol and a queen,
Melt into air: and now I feel, how keen,
That what I needed most I most withstood.

"Ye fabled joys, ye tales of empty love,
What are ye now, if twofold death be nigh?
The first is certain, and the last I dread.
Ah! what does Sculpture, what does Painting prove
When we have seen the cross, and fixed our eye
On Him whose arms of love were there outspread?" [2]

Wifeless and childless, he had no heir of his genius. He never would teach a pupil. No entreaties would induce him to let even princes or prelates enter his

[1] Dennistoun, *Dukes of Urbino*, II. 161.

[2] Mr. Glassford's translation: —

"Gli armorosi pensier' già vani e lieti
Che sien' or', s'a dué morte mi avvicino?
D' una so certo, e l' altra mi minaccia.
Nè pinger', nè sculpir fià pùr che queti
L' anima volta a quello amor divino,
Ch' aperse a prender noi in croce le braccia."

studio while he was at work. "*Tanti ingenii vir*," says Paolo Giovio in his brief biography, "*natura adeo agrestis et ferus extitit, ut supra incredibiles vitæ sordes* (that surely is a touch of Renaissance arrogance and luxuriousness), *successores in arte posteris inviderit.*"

The glory of Art and of Italy began to decline from the year 1520. It required a genius as immense as Michael Angelo's to produce an effect so powerful for evil. But a new epoch dawned. On the day that Michael Angelo died, February 18, 1564, Galileo was born.

As far as Art is concerned, "the sound of the waters of the fountain of life and emotion had been dug deepest by Michael Angelo, opening thenceforward through thickets darker and more dark, and with waves ever more soundless and slow, into the Dead Sea wherein its waters have been stayed." [1]

There is a Last Judgment by Tintoretto in the Church of Sta Maria del Orto in Venice, which Burckhardt most strangely calls coarse and tasteless.

"By Tintoret only," says Mr. Ruskin, "has this unimaginable event been grappled with in its Verity; not typically, nor symbolically, but as they may see it who shall not sleep, but be changed. Only one traditional circumstance he has received with Dante and Michael Angelo, the Boat of the Condemned; but the impetuosity of his mind bursts out even in the adoption of this image. He has not stopped at the scowling ferryman of the one, nor at the sweeping blow and demon-dragging of the other, but seized, Hylas-like, by the limbs, and tearing up the earth in his agony, the victim is dashed into his destruction. Nor is it the sluggish Lethe, nor the fiery lake, that bears the cursed vessel, but the oceans of the earth and the waters of the firmament gathered into one white, ghastly cataract; the river of the wrath of God roaring down into the gulf where the world has melted with its fervent heat, choked with the ruins of

[1] Ruskin, *On the Old Road*, 1. 77.

nature, and the limbs of its corpses tossed out of the whirling, like water-wheels. Bat-like, out of the holes, and caverns, and shadows of the earth, the bones gather and the clay heaps heave — into half kneaded anatomies. . . . The Firmament is full of them, a very dust of human souls, that drifts and floats, and falls into the interminable, inevitable light, — currents of atom life in the arteries of heaven, — now soaring up slowly, borne up wingless by their inward faith and by the angel powers invisible, now hurled in countless drifts of horror before the breath of their condemnation."[1]

There is a Last Judgment painted by Rubens in 1600, which is now at Munich, and is the largest picture which he ever painted. His studies of the subject in the National Gallery are even more displeasing than those of Michael Angelo, and are much more absolutely meaningless, since it is obvious at a glance that the painter himself regarded them as mere vehicles for the display of his brilliant, but soulless, art.

The subject has not often been treated by modern painters. They have rightly felt it to be altogether too awful and inconceivable. The most important modern attempt to paint it is that by Cornelius in Ludwig's Kirche, Munich. It is his masterpiece, and was painted in 1846. Among other portraits he has introduced those of Fra Angelico and Dante, who are being borne by angels heavenwards.

It would be impossible to select a treatment of the Last Judgment more absolutely antithetic to that of Michael Angelo than the *tondo* of Sir E. Burne Jones, called *Dies Domini*. The predominant tone of the picture is a lovely blue, formed by the intermingling wings of unnumbered angels. The faces of four of these angels look out from the sea of azure plumage on either side of Christ, and are

[1] On Tintoret's other pictures of the Last Judgment, see *Stones of Venice*, III. 317, and *Modern Painters*, II. 177. There is a Last Judgment by Van der Weyden (A.D. 1447).

full of the weird, impressive beauty which the painter always chooses for his predominant type. In the midst is seated the figure of the Saviour. The face is youthful, the hair dark, the expression full of pity and seriousness.

Dies Domini. (Sir E. Burne Jones.)

His upraised hand shows the scar of the nail. With the left hand He has drawn His robe aside, and points with one finger to the wound which the lance-thrust left. In this picture, Christ the Judge retains all His sternness against sin, and all His majesty, and yet is clothed with love and serious tenderness. The soft, sweet colour of the picture seems to breathe into it an element of eternal hope; while yet — as it should be — the certainty of just retribution for all willing sin is retained, and the sense of the awful consequences of sin is not obliterated by an intentional self-delusion.

CONCLUSION.

IDEALS OF CHRIST IN ART.

"Thine eyes shall see the King in his beauty." — Ps. xxxiii. 17.

We have passed in review the methods in which Art has presented to us, from the earliest days, its conception of the Saviour of mankind, and its mode of viewing the scenes through which He moved during His earthly life. In that review we have had an opportunity for learning much respecting the varying phases of Christian thought, and have seen how it swayed, now in one direction, now in another, the religious emotions of mankind. But Art has had a higher function than merely to reflect, either the differing temperaments of its gifted sons, or the vicissitudes of theological opinion in the ages which they adorned. Every noble picture has great lessons of its own to teach. The inspiration of genius has not been thrown away. It has revealed to us many a lofty truth, and awakened in us many an ennobling emotion. The presence and the memory of great pictures have exercised an elevating influence over us, and have helped, as poetic imagination also helps, to lead us to

The great in conduct and the pure in thought.

Paintings have stirred our sluggish imaginations, and have enabled us to realize more of the beauty of Christ's sinless years than we might otherwise have been able to

attain. They have fixed our thoughts upon Him, and have, as it were, led us to draw nearer to Him, and live more closely with Him. Pictures have not only been the Bible of the ignorant and of the poor, they have asserted their power over the noble and the learned. It is true that Art has often degenerated from her own truest ideal, and has sunk into error, into irreverence, and even into coarse profanity. Nothing human is perfect, and Art has apostatized as well as Religion from the truth and simplicity which are in Christ Jesus. But we may learn from her faithfulness, while we refuse to be misled by her aberrations. We may follow her guiding star when it shines in the pure heaven, while we neglect and despise her false lights, which only flicker over sloughs of death. Pictures have sometimes been sufficient to fill a whole life with holy enthusiasm.[1] No less a person than Count Zinzendorf, the founder of the Moravian settlements at Herrnhut, has recorded that one of the deepest impressions of his religious career was stamped upon his soul by a picture of the suffering Christ at Düsseldorf, with the lines beneath,

"I did all this for thee,
What wilt thou do for Me?"

But when we think of all that Jesus was, it is natural that not one picture of Him among ten thousand should satisfy us; it is natural that almost every such picture should fall far short of the dim, unattempted ideal hidden deep in our own hearts.

In this fact we find justification for the decision of the Council, held at Constantinople in 754, which, in direct opposition to the views held by the Fathers of the Quinisext Council, declared that "Christ, in the glorified body, though not incorporeal, was too exalted to be figured in human Art in an earthly material after the analogy of any

[1] Pope Gregory II., in his violent answer to Leo the Iconoclast (Labbe, VII. 9 coll. 14–16), describes the emotions which had been inspired in him by a sacred picture.

other human body." This feeling as regards statues still prevails throughout the Eastern Church. A Greek monk is said to have remarked to Titian, "Your scandalous pictures stand quite out from the canvas; *they are as bad as statues;*" — and he refused to receive the paintings.[1]

And in the daring endeavour to paint a separate picture of Christ, the painters have been driven to strange and even painful shifts.

Some have attempted an eclectic combination of elements which appeared to them separately beautiful, as we are told some of the ancient Greek sculptors and painters did in their figures of the heathen gods; — and no greater failures than these incongruous combinations can possibly be conceived.

Some have simply given us a reflex of a living model which appeared to them to be dignified or beautiful; with the result that both the features and the expression sometimes positively repel, and often grievously disappoint us. This remark is illustrated in the picture of Christ by Boccacino, the Cremonese painter (about 1515). It does not, however, deserve the implied scorn of Vasari, who says that when Boccacino's pictures in S. Maria Traspontine were unveiled, every one laughed; yet the face of Christ is of the conventional type, and is neither intellectual nor expressive. His right hand is uplifted to bless; His left exhibits an open book; He is seated on the clouds amid streaming rays of light.[2]

We cannot accept the theory that most painters have, consciously or unconsciously, done little more than idealize their own reminiscence of the likeness handed down from the fourth century, and represented by the earliest picture in the Catacomb of St. Callistus. It is true that there was a sort of accepted type which seems to have become general as far back as the days of Constantine; but I cannot see that a common likeness runs, to any marked extent, through the ancient specimens furnished by Mr. Heaphy, and for

[1] Gibbon, IV. 467.

[2] Given by Rosini, IV. 162.

reasons given in the earlier part of my book, I am wholly unable to believe that the Callistine or any other image, rests on anything which can be distantly regarded as an authentic tradition.

In the absence of such a type it was natural, and advantageous, that each painter should either produce the highest conception which he could himself attain, or that he should adopt the general characteristics which had most approved themselves to the religion of his age.

But unhappily, — so limited are the powers of men, so complete is our incapacity to imagine the measure of the fulness of Christ, — many of the ideals of the Redeemer have been either wholly and offensively erroneous, or, at best, so one-sided as to shew the influence of widespread religious decadence. Art has been misled by partial or perverted religious teaching, and the attempt to wander hand in hand with conventional orthodoxy has but helped to lead it farther astray. There have been in the Christian Church whole communities of men, so little true to the meaning of the New Testament — with most of which, indeed, the majority of them were but very superficially and fragmentarily acquainted — that only the most distorted and false ideal of Christ could possibly be produced by any form of Art which was subject to their dominion, or even to their influence. No true conception of Him could possibly be formed by the carnal, the terrified, or the merely ecclesiastical mind. A picture becomes feeble or positively repellent, the moment that the pencil is touched by the hands of usurpation, of weakness, of sensuality, or of pride.

Gloom, Asceticism, Wrath, Fear, Effeminacy, Pharisaism, Priestcraft — these have been the most powerful and the most deadly corrupters of the true ideal of the Lord of Life and Love.

The spirit of gloom — of gloom unhealthy, morbid, and absolutely antithetic to the gladness which was the true birthright of Christianity — is illustrated in many pictures

of the German and of the Spanish schools. In the German schools the Renaissance elements which were at work tended at least partially to counteract the predominant ghastliness. But the Spanish painters were bondslaves of the Romish Church, and their art was tainted into pestilence by the horrible blight of the Inquisition. Spanish Art, from its late dawn, when its light was borrowed from foreign sources, down through its more independent stages of existence, was rigidly subjugated to the service of a corrupted Church. It was bidden to deal with mystic and sacred themes, but its mode of treatment was ever naturalistic and material, all borrowed machinery of clouds and cherubs notwithstanding. It was in portraiture only that the Inquisition left the Spanish painter freedom enough to express himself in his natural language.

If any one will look at Albrecht Dürer's noble picture of himself at the age of twenty-eight, he will see that in that master's many pictures of Christ he has, perhaps unintentionally, created the modern idea of Christ by borrowing the principal features from his own countenance. He himself remarks: "Every mother is pleased with her own child; whence it happens that many painters' works resemble themselves." This is a well-known experience, the consequences of which Dürer avoided less than any one. "The old Oriental type of Christ, of which the Van Dycks and Roger Van der Wyden still made use, which Schongauer adhered to, and which is still perpetuated at Rome in the *Vera effigies*, displays a high, rounded forehead, arched eyebrows, a straight nose, and the lower part of the face and chin pointed; it is expressive simply of gentleness and suffering. In Dürer, instead of this merely passive look, we have the long head of medium width, a broad, massive forehead seamed with four wrinkles, a long nose with a well-arched bridge, deep-set eyes, a broad, powerful chin, and abundant curling hair. It is an energetic German face; in brief, it is, in all essential points, Dürer's own countenance. He was conscious of having

placed himself in antagonism to tradition by the introduction of a new type. An Ecce Homo of 1514 reverts to the old tradition, probably, because some donor who commissioned the picture objected to the new type as incorrect and profane, and forbade its use."[1]

Perhaps the best ideals are those of the Venetian School, Titian's picture of the Saviour in the Pitti at Florence is a youthful work and is not remarkable; but Giovanni Bellini, we are told, "frequently painted the single figure of the Redeemer, representations in which, by grand nobleness of expression, solemn bearing, and the excellent arrangement of drapery, he created a dignity which has rarely been surpassed."[2] There is also a very impressive single figure of Christ by Cima da Conegliano in the Dresden Gallery. When I was there, many years ago, a learned German discovered that the broidery on the hem of the dress of the figure is really an Arabic inscription (which I suppose Cima must have literally copied from some Eastern dress), meaning that "the Highest Perfection is the standpoint of Deity."

From the eleventh to the sixteenth century, says Didron, the images of Christ are generally bearded, never smiling, always severe and sad. In the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries the Father is often represented holding His Crucified Son, even in heaven, which is thus saddened by His cruel agonies.[3] In the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries the Ecce Homo, the Crucifixion, the Descents from the Cross, the Pietàs, become more and more steeped in melancholy.

This gloom was partly due to the false views of Christian duty, which date from the third and fourth centuries.

The spirit of exaggerated, unchristian, and unspiritual asceticism, borrowed from the East, gradually produced pictures of Christ of the Byzantine type, which can only

[1] Thausing, II. 104.

[2] Lübke, *History of Art*, II. 180 (who gives a drawing).

[3] We have a picture of this kind by Pesellino in the National Gallery (No. 727).

be described as painful.[1] They culminated in the idolatry of crucifixes with convulsed limbs, and gaunt emaciation,

Head of Christ from mosaic in S. Appollinaire Nuova, Ravenna.

"offered to the groaning worship of mankind." Such dreadfully irreverent modes of presenting the Divine Man may be seen by hundreds in the hot valleys of Switzerland

[1] The accompanying example from the seventh-century mosaics of S. Apollinare Nuovo at Ravenna, is more favourable than most.

and Italy, and are monstrous aberrations from the spirit of reserve with which the sorrows of Jesus are represented to us in the Gospel narratives.

The ideal of the Ascetic Christ was due mainly to the errors and the ignorance of self-torturing monks; that of

The Avenging Christ. (Michael Angelo.)

the Wrathful Christ culminated in the sixteenth century. The terrific and sombre genius of Michael Angelo helped, as we have seen, to darken the imagination of Christendom

by his picture of the Last Judgment in the Sistine Chapel, where the awful Saviour, gloomy as night, with a gesture of ruthless menace, is driving the damned in headlong ruin into the abyss, and seems as if His right hand were

> "Grasping ten thousand thunders, which He sent,
> Before Him, such as in their souls infixed
> Plagues."

What a chasm separates this Christ of eclipse and earthquake, of fury and menace, from the Fair Shepherd of the Catacombs! How different is it even from the touching sculpture in Peterborough Cathedral, where the Father, as though in pathetic appeal to His lost prodigals, is upholding before them the bleeding hand of His only begotten Son! How different from the seventh century mosaic in the Church of San Feodoro at Rome, where Christ, in His violet robe, looks with a face full of love from the blue starred globe on which He is seated in the act of benediction! In the lurid picture of Michael Angelo, in which the pride of Science plays far greater part than the faith of the Gospels, and the gloom of tormenting fury than the peace of love, Christ almost turns His back on the Virgin, who pleads and pities. The heart of sinful humanity is made more merciful than the heart of the King of Love. It was reserved (as we have seen) for Rubens to fall into yet lower depths of serenely unconscious yet shocking blasphemy, in that picture, which, in profoundest ignorance of the first truths of religion, represents the Son of Man, who for our sakes emptied Himself of His glory, sparing the world at the intercession of St. Francis of Assisi!

The reaction against this Christ of terror led in later centuries to the effeminate, languorous, pietistic Christ with fair hair and blue eyes, of a later sentimentalism. Christ is thus painted by artists akin in spirit to Sassoferrato and Carlo Dolci. Even the thunderous athlete of Michael Angelo is infinitely preferable to this anæmic and

attitudinizing ideal of religious artificiality. In such types we see a miserable and feeble prettiness, devoid not only of grandeur but of common manliness. When the Jesuits complained to Nicolas Poussin that he had abandoned their ideal of Christ, he gave them the manly answer that he could not imagine Him in the guise of an effeminate and sentimental priestling with his head on one side.

Mr. Ruskin selects as the noblest ideal of Christ known to him a sculptured figure of the thirteenth century on the west front of Amiens Cathedral.[1] It is known far and wide as *Le Beau Dieu d'Amiens*,[2] and is far finer than the Beau Dieu de Rheims. Into this figure the artist has put a world of true and noble thought. Christ is represented as standing at the central point of all History, and of all Revelation: the Christ, or Prophesied Messiah of all the Past, the King and the Redeemer of all Future Time. The sculptor understood and desired to illustrate the text of St. John (John xx. 31), "These things are written that ye might believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God; and that believing ye might have life."

Therefore at His left is the goodly fellowship of the Prophets, looking towards Him with their faces full of passionate yearning; at His right the glorious company of the Apostles, their eyes resting on Him with the expression of perfect peace. He is not dead, but living; not agonizing and crucified, in the brief hour of His humiliation and the apparent defeat of the hour and power of darkness, but supreme and majestic; not sickly with asceticism, or feeble with sentimentality, but in the fulness of manly beauty and kingly strength. His right hand is uplifted to bless and not to curse, to help and not to smite, to save and not to destroy. As the Lord of the Virtues, He leads His followers; as the Conqueror of Hell,

[1] This is reproduced for the frontispiece of the volume.

[2] Schaase IV. 410; and see an account of the façades of Amiens, Rheims, and Strasburg in Stockbauer, pp. 318–323.

He subdues the vices under His feet. The lion of Pride and the dragon of Passion, subdued into nobleness, support His pedestal, but He tramples underneath Him into annihilation the Basilisk of rebellious insolence and the mud-bred adder of corruption. On either side of Him, and beneath Him, and around Him, twine and blossom the emblems of life and fragrancy, the fruitful Vine with its purple clusters, the Lily of innocence, the Rose of the fulness of holy joy. In His left hand is the Book of the Eternal Law, "This do and thou shalt live!"[1]

His right hand is uplifted in loving and kingly benediction.

Observe that the Lord is here set forth to us, not as the idol of a morbid superstition, or an artificial sentimentalism; not as one to be worshipped with spasmodic penances and groaning emotion, as by morbific monks, sobbing all day over the five wounds of the crucifix, but as the Lord of life, and emancipation, and illimitable hope. "What Christ's life is, what His commandments are, what His judgments will be, what He is now doing, what He requires of us to do, these are set forth as the true subjects for our thoughts; and the fall from the pure and beautiful lessons of Christianity, and all the corruptions of its abortive practice, have sprung from the too exclusive contemplation of His death rather than His life, and the dwelling too much on His past sufferings while we dwell too little on our present duty."

And the idea of the whole splendid symbol is: "I am come that ye may have"—what?—not a sickly asceticism, not an effeminate will-worship, not a functional Pharisaism, not a servile surrender of reason and conscience to fellow-sinners,—but "*I am come that they might have life; and that they might have it more abundantly.*"

And the further idea is: "Thou shalt shew me the path of life; in Thy presence there is fulness of joy; and at Thy right hand there are pleasures for evermore."

[1] See Ruskin, *The Bible of Amiens.*

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[1] I have only consulted some of these.

LIST OF PAINTERS.

The following list is chiefly abbreviated from that of Sir F. W. Burton:[1]—

Schools of Tuscany.

Margaritone of Arezzo	1216–1293
Cimabue, Giovanni	1240?–1302?
Giotto	1266?–1336
Gaddi, Taddeo	1300?–*living* 1366
Orcagna, Andrea di Cione, called	1308?–1368
Spinello Aretino	1333?–1410
Angelico, Fra Giovanni, da Fiesole	1387–1455
Andrea dal Castagno	1390?–1457
Domenico Veneziano	14..–1461
Lippi, Fra Filippo	1406?–1469
Gozzoli, Benozzo	1420–1498
Pollajuolo, Antonio	1429?–1498
Andrea Verrocchio	1432–1488
Botticelli, Alessandro	1447–1510
Ghirlandajo, Domenico del	1449–1494
Vinci, Leonardo da	1452–1519
Lippi, Filippino	1457?–1504
Credi, Lorenzo di	1459–1537
Bartolommeo, Fra	1469–1517
Buonarroti, Michelangelo	1475–1564
Bigio, Francia	1482–1524
Ghirlandajo, Ridolfo del	1483–1561
Sarto, Andrea del (Andrea d'Agnolo)	1486–1531
Bronzino (Angello di Cosimo, called)	1502–1572
Venusti, Marcello	15..?–15..?
Dolci, Carlo	1616–1686

[1] I have omitted the names of those painters to whom little or no allusion is made.

Sienese School.

Duccio di Buoninsegna . . . . . *about* 1260–*living* 1339
Lorenzetti, Pietro . . . . . 12..–1348?
Lorenzetti, Ambrogio . . . . . 12..–*living* 1345
Ugolino da Siena . . . .–1349?

Umbrian and Romagnole Schools.

Gentile da Fabriano 1362–1428
Francesca, Piero della . . . . . 1415?–1492
Signorelli, Luca of Cortona . . . . . 1441?–1523
Perugino, Pietro Vannucci, il 1446–1523
Pinturicchio, Bernardino Betto, il 1454–1513
Lo Spagna, Giovanni, di Pietro, called . . . 14..–*after* 1530
Sanzio, Raffaello (Raphael of Urbino) . . . 1483–1520

Schools of Lombardy and the Emilia.

(milanese.)

Borgognone, Ambrogio da Fossano, il . . . . 1455?–1523
Beltraffio (or Boltraffio), Giov. Antonio. . . . 1467–1516
Marco da Oggionno . . . . . 1470?–1540?
Luini, Bernardino . . . . . *about* 1475–*after* 1533
Bazzi, Giovanni Antonio (il Sodoma) 1477–1549

(cremona.)

Boccaccino, Boccaccio . . . . . *painting* 1496–1518

(parma and modena.)

Allegri, Antonio (da Correggio) 1494–1534
Parmigiano, Francesco Mazzola, il 1503–1540

Schools of Venice and the Venetian Territories.

Vivarini, Antonio (of Murano) . . . *painting* 1440–1464
Vivarini, Bartolommeo (of Murano) . . *painting* 1450–1498–9
Bellini, Gentile . . . . . 1426–7?–1507
Bellini, Giovanni . . . . . 1428?–1516
Crivelli, Carlo . . . . . *painting* 1468–*after* 1494
Antonello da Messina . . . . . 1444?–1493?
Carpaccio, Vittore . . . . . *painting* 1479–1522
Basaiti, Marco . . . . . *painting before* 1500–*after* 1521
Montagna, Bartolommeo (of Brescia and Vicenza), *about* 1450–1523
Cima, Giovanni Battista . . . . . *painting* 1489–1517
Marziale, Marco . . . . . *painting* 1492–*after* 1507
Bissolo, Francesco . . . . . *painting* 1492–*after* 1530

Previtali, Andrea (of Bergamo) . . . *painting* 14..–1528
Bonifazio Veronese . . . .–1540
Barbarelli, Giorgio (Giorgione) . . . . *before* 1477–1511
Vecellio, Tiziano (Titian) 1477–1576
Savoldo, Giov. Girolamo (of Brescia) . . . 1480?–*after* 1548
Lotto, Lorenzo (of Treviso) . . . . . 1480?–*about* 1555
Luciani, Sebastiano (Sebast. del Piombo) . . . 1485?–1547
Romanino, Girolamo, of Brescia . . . 1487?–*in or about* 1566
Moretto da Brescia, Aless. Bonvicino, il . . . 1498–1555
Moroni, Giambattista (of Bergamo) . . . . 15..?–1578
Ponte Jacopo da (Jacopo Bassano) 1510–1592
Robusti, Jacopo (il Tintoretto) 1518–1594
Caliari, Paolo (Paolo Veronese) 1528–1588

Padua (Venetia).

Schiavone, Gregorio . . . . . 14..–....?
Mantegna, Andrea 1431–1506
Mantegna, Francesco . . . . . 1470?–*living* 1517

Verona (Venetia).

Pisano, Vittore (Pisanello) . . . . . 1380–1455 *or* 6
Liberale da Verona 1451–1535
Girolamo dai Libri 1474–1556
Morando, Paolo (il Cavazzola) 1486–1522
Caliari, Paolo (see also Schools of Venice) . . . 1528–1588

Ferrarese School.

Tura, Cosimo (or Cosmè) . . . . . 1420?–1495
Grandi, Ercole de' Roberti, or de' . . . . . 1450?–1496
Costa, Lorenzo . . . . . 1460?–1535
Grandi, Ercole di Giulio Cesare . . . . . 1460?–1531
Dosso Dossi (Giovanni) . . . . . 1479?–1542
Mazzolino, Ludovico . . . . . 1480?–1528?
Tisio, Benvenuto (il Garofalo) 1481–1559

Bolognese School.

Lippo di Dalmasio . . . . . *painting* 1376–1410
Raibolini, Francesco (il Francia) 1450–1517
Carracci, Ludovico 1555–1619
Carracci, Agostino 1557–1602
Carracci, Annibale 1560–1609
Reni, Guido 1575–1642
Zampieri, Domenico (il Domenichino) . . . 1581–1641
Barbieri, Giov. Francesco (il Guercino) . . . 1591–1666

ROMAN AND NEAPOLITAN SCHOOL.

Pippi, Giulio (GIULIO ROMANO)	1492–1546
Barocci, Federigo	1528–1612
Ribera, Giuseppe (lo SPAGNOLETTO); see also Spanish School	1588–1656
Salvi, Giov. Battista (SASSOFERRATO)	1605–1685
Rosa, Salvatore (of Naples)	1615–1673
Cavallino, Bernardo (of Naples)	1622–1654
Maratti (or Maratta), Carlo	1625–1713

SPANISH SCHOOL.

Morales, Luis de	....–1586
Ribera, Josef de (see also Roman School)	1588–1656
Zurbaran, Francesco	1598–1662
Velazquez, Don Diego de Silva y	1599–1660
Murillo, Bartolomé Estéban	1618–1682

DUTCH SCHOOL.

Rembrandt van Rÿn	1606–1669

FLEMISH SCHOOLS, XV., XVI., AND XVII. CENTURIES.

Eyck, Jan van	1390?–1440
Weyden, Rogier van der	*about* 1400–1464
Memlinc, Hans	....–1495
Campaña, Pedro	1503–1570?
Rubens, Peter Paul	1577–1640
Teniers, David (the Elder)	1582–1649
Dyck, Sir Anthony van	1599–1641
Teniers, David (the Younger)	1610–1690

GERMAN SCHOOLS.

William of Cologne (MEISTER WILHELM)	*living* 1380
Lochner (or Loethener) (MEISTER STEPHAN)	13..?–1451
Cranach Lucas	1472–1553

FRENCH SCHOOL.

Poussin, Nicolas	1594–1665
Gellée, Claude (CLAUDE LE LORRAIN)	1600–1682

BYZANTINE SCHOOL.

Emmanuel	XVII. Century

INDEX OF NAMES

Abarbanel, 18
Abercius, Saint, 17, 38
Abgarus, 79
Abraham, 36, 72
Adulowald, 400
Albani, 207
Alberti, Leon, 124
Albertinelli, 227
Alexander Severus, 72
Altdörfer, 264
Ambrose, Saint, 73, 141
Ananias, 80
Andrea del Castagno, see Castagno
del Sarto, see Sarto
Verrocchio, see Verrocchio
Angelico, Fra, 101, 117, 131, 133, 153, 158, 221, 222, 224, 235, 237, 246, 271, 295, 299, 302, 326, 329, 344, 377, 379, 391, 407, 433, 462, 464, 469, 477
Antelami, Benedetto, 421, 422
Antonello da Messina, 135, 409
Anubis, 95
Apollonius, 72
Aretino, Pietro, 245, 246, 466, 473
Aringhi, 86, 353
Aristobulus, 74
Aristotle, 71
Arnold, Matthew, 45
Asterius, 57, 113
Athanasius the Sinaite, 14
Augusti, 400
Augustine, Saint, 16, 17, 21, 35, 59, 72, 73, 86, 91

Bajazet II., 83
Baldovinetti, 130, 235
Bandelli, 347
Barberigo, 212
Barbieri, 173
Barocci, 175, 176
Bartolommeo, Fra, 74, 133-5, 183, 206, 227, 260, 261, 274, 329, 422, 464
Basaiti, 374
Basil, Saint, 73
Bassano, 329, 331, 373, 447
Bassus, Junius, 92, 352
Bastiani, Fra, 181
Bayliss, Wyke, 91, 137
Bede, Venerable, 16
Bell, Malcolm, 256
Bellini, 110, 116, 131-3, 135, 150, 153-6, 174, 177, 202, 203, 206, 210, 212, 246, 259, 262, 280, 328, 337, 374, 385, 409, 426, 448, 484
Ben, Magdalena, 210
Benozzo Gozzoli, 174
Bentivoglio, Anton, 243
Berenice, 81
Bernard, Saint, 142, 145, 405
Biagio da Cesena, 466
Bissolo, 174, 430
Blake, 332
Blanc, Charles, 347, 384
Bluemaerts, 332
Boccaccio, 124
Boccacino, 388, 481
Boccati, 150
Boldetti, 89
Bonaventura, Saint, 142
Bonifazio, 227, 330, 334, 448
Bonosus, 13
Borgognone, Ambrogio, 241, 380
Bos, Jerome, 417
Bosio, 219, 353
Bossuet, 241
Botticelli, 74, 104, 130, 133, 134, 149-52, 162, 168, 169, 227, 237, 245, 274, 311
Bronzino, 136, 436, 437
Brown, Ford Madox, 343, 432
Browning, Mrs. Barrett, 154, 385
Robert, 154, 172, 193, 416

Brunelleschi, 134
Burckhardt, 117, 211, 287, 299, 338, 422, 448, 476
Burton, Sir F., 225, 385
Buti, Lucrezia, 193
Spinetta, 194
Byron, 418, 471, 472

Cabal of Naples, 207
Calvaert, Denis, 207
Calvi, 200
Campano, Pedro, 339
Cano, 176
Caranzas, 100
Caravaggio, 136, 173, 247, 334, 448, 450
Carducho, 348
Carlos II., 417
Carlyle, 10, 472, 473
Caro, Annibale, 133
Carpaccio, 116, 150, 206, 262, 448
Carpzov, J. B., 85
Carracci, 135, 157, 207, 312, 321, 327, 329, 334, 382, 444
Carracciolo, 207
Cartwright, Julia, 230
Castagno, Andrea del, 409, 426
Cavallini, Pietro, 220, 297
Cavallino, Bernardo, 243
Cavalieri, Tommaso de', 471
Cavazzola, Paolo, 452
Celsus, 55, 70, 71
Cenni, 120
Cennini, 124
Cesari da Sesto, 283
Cespedes, Pablo de, 348
Charles of Anjou, 120
V., 336
XIII., 202
Chosroes, 80
Chrysostom, Saint, 73
Cicero, 20, 32
Cigoli, 386
Cimabue, 110, 117-25, 130, 145, 205, 220
Cima da Conegliano, 116, 155, 174, 265, 451, 484
Claude, 312
Clement of Alexandria, Saint, 7, 12, 38, 54, 60, 69
VI., 462
VII., 328
VIII., 111
Cole, 451
Colonna, Vittoria, 410, 468, 471
Comestor, 125
Conciolo, 122
Condivi, 424
Constantia, 56
Constantine, 24, 26, 89, 90, 94, 102
Corenzio, 207
Cornara, 197
Cornelius, 477
Correggio, 131, 136, 171, 173, 175, 204, 208, 227, 248, 249, 264, 265, 375, 384, 454
Costa, Lorenzo, 200
Costanzi, 196, 197
Cousin, Victor, 127
Coxcie, 383
Cranach, Lucas, 264, 333
Credi, Lorenzo di, 130, 133, 227, 240, 241
Crivelli, Carlo, 174, 224, 225, 428
Crowe and Cavalcaselle, 212
Cupid, 34
Curé D'Ars, 106
Cyril of Alexandria, Saint, 73, 142
of Jerusalem, Saint, 13

D'Agincourt, 42, 353
Dale, Dr., 392
Daniel, 36
Daniele da Volterra, 422, 467
Dante, 10, 19, 115, 124, 145, 152, 154, 168, 221, 237, 298, 301, 410, 461, 470-2, 477
David, 85
De Coxcie, 383
Dennistoun, 127, 229
Desiderius, 104
Diderot, 127
Didon, 67
Didron, 47, 99, 103, 484
Dino del Garbo, 462
Diogenes, 28
Dionysius, 105
Dobson, 271
Dolce, Ludovico, 467
Dolci, Carlo, 156, 177, 391, 487
Domenichino, 136, 207, 264, 390
Dominic, Saint, 123, 142, 150, 205
Donatello, 134, 181, 270
Duccio, 118, 119, 122-4, 131, 145, 220, 225, 295, 298, 299, 311, 329, 375, 384, 451
Durand, Godefroy, 4
Dürer, 160, 170, 171, 191, 204, 229, 244, 254, 259, 264, 271, 286, 310, 331, 354, 360, 371, 383, 387, 409, 410, 434, 436, 444, 483
Dysmas, 268

Eastlake, Lady, 387
Sir Charles, 206, 333, 373, 380, 429
Eclectics, 136
Emerson, 9
Ephrem Syrus, Saint, 141

Epiphanius, Saint, 57, 84, 141
Ercole di Guilio Grandi, 198
Euphemia, Saint, 113
Eusebius, 56, 79, 82
Eustochium, 234
Evagrius, 80

Felix, Saint, of Nola, 58
Ferdinand III., 164
Ferrari, Gaudenzio, 377, 386
Ferretti, 50
Fiorenzo di Lorenzo, 249
Fleury, 219, 271, 322, 352
Ford, 247
Fortunatus, Saint, 28, 141
Francesca or Franceschi, Piero dei, see Piero.
Francia, 131, 150, 164, 169, 209, 227, 242, 265, 303, 408, 427
Francis of Assisi, Saint, 106, 125, 142, 152, 404, 487
Frederick the Wise, 254
Fuseli, 475

Galileo, 476
Galla Placidia, 26
Gallerani, Cecilia, 176
Garbo, Dino del, 462
Garbo, Raffaellino del, 442
Garofalo, 200, 265, 374
Garrucci, 400
Gaudenzio Ferrari, 377, 386
Gaye, 474
George III., 348
IV., 348
Ghiberti, 117, 134
Ghirlandajo, 128, 235, 241, 254, 387, 474
Giacomo, Fra, 123
Gianotti, Donato, 473
Gilbert, 133
Giordano, Luca, 417
Giorgione, 155, 196, 204, 328, 427
Giotto, 101, 124, 125, 127, 130, 131, 154, 200, 234, 261, 264, 295-7, 315, 323, 329, 343, 384, 411, 454, 460, 462
Giotteschi, 127, 130, 158, 220, 264
Giovio, Paolo, 476
Girolamo, 168
Gonzago, Francesco, 202
Gozzoli, Benozzo, 174
Gregory of Nazianzus, Saint, 14, 285, 310, 334, 356
II., 80, 101
IX., 82
of Tours, 400
the Great, 400
Griesbach, 454
Gruyer, 143, 148, 150, 227, 248
Guercino, 136, 173, 175, 331, 383, 431, 452
Guido, see Reni
Guistiniani, 334

Hadrian, 82
Harrich, Jobst, 191
Hazlitt, 247
Heaphy, 91, 481
Heaton, Mrs., 434
Heemskerk, 332, 377
Helena, 90
Helvidius, 141
Hemans, 307
Herbert, George, 375
Hercules, 34
Hermogenes, 5, 54
Hilary, Saint, 46
Hoffmann, 290
Hogarth, 126, 186
Holbein, 209, 210, 303, 410, 426
Honthorst, 377, 448
Horace, 437
Hugh of St. Victor, 142
Hunt, Holman, 268, 274, 275, 285, 287, 289, 297, 303

Innocent VIII., 83
Irenæus, 71, 72
Irene, 102

Jacopo da Ponte, 373
Jacopone, 142, 233
James, Saint, 13
Jameson, Mrs., 336
Jerome, Saint, 13, 17, 24, 25, 36, 70, 71, 106, 141
Joanes, Juan de, 348
John, Bishop of Jerusalem, 58
John of Damascus, Saint, 4, 83
Jonah, 35
Jones, Sir E. Burne, 230, 235, 256, 418, 477
Juan de Joanes, 348
de Valdes Leal, 416
Julian, 81
Julius II., 472, 473
Junius Bassus, 92, 352
Justinian, 104
Justin Martyr, 69, 179
Justus of Ghent, 343

Kannegiesen, Anna, 210
Dorothea, 210
Kauffman, Angelica, 186
Keble, 408
Keim, 74, 76
Kotzel, Martin, 387

Kraft, Adam, 387
Kugler, 99, 104, 107, 110

Lactantius, 60
Lagardo, 266
Lampridius, 72
Le Brun, 312
Leighton, Sir F., 128
Lentulus, 84, 93
Leo, 80, 101, 102
Leon Alberti, 124
Leonardo da Vinci, 116, 130, 131, 133, 134, 136, 155, 166-9, 176, 178, 180, 183, 186, 197, 206, 241, 283, 287, 289, 302, 309, 345, 346, 409, 413, 426, 466, 474
Leslie, C. R., 323, 334
Liberale, Saint, 197
Lindsay, Lord, 45, 124, 127, 302, 399, 463
Lippi, Filippino, 130, 224, 225
  Fra Filippo, 130, 193, 194, 195, 224, 241
Lippo di Dalmasio, 111
Lloyd, Watkiss, 317
Lomazzo, 347
Long, Edwin, 267, 330
Longinus, 355
Lorenzetti, 119
Lorenzo di Credi, 130, 133, 227, 240, 241
  Fiorenzo di, 249
  Veneto, 222
Lotto, Lorenzo, 133, 155, 204, 205, 245, 246
Loyola, Ignatius, 148
Luca Giordano, see Giordano
  Signorelli, see Signorelli
Lucas, 82
  van Leyden, 311
Luciani, Sebastian, 328
Lücke, 427
Lucretius, 418
Luini, Bernardino, 116, 117, 133, 155, 160, 162, 166, 167, 169, 180, 184, 186, 241, 246, 254, 283, 286, 287, 289, 379, 411-3
  Giovanni, 133
Luke, Saint, 31, 82, 142
Luther, 473

Mabillon, 50
Mabuse, 334
Maes, Nicolas, 333
Maitland, Dr., 28
Malatesta, Galeotto, 396
Mandeville, Sir John, 168
Mantegna, Andrea, 116, 134, 156, 177, 200-2, 224, 227, 260, 425, 428
Mantegna, Francesco, 442, 447
Manuel Panselinos, 105
Marc Antonio, 339
Marcella, 234
Marcello Venusti, 184, 465
Margaritone of Arezzo, 110, 111, 223
Mariotto, Albertinelli, 464
Martha of Bethany, 81
Martigny, 14, 23, 38, 284, 333
Martin de Vos, 336
Martini, Simone, 190
Marziale, Marco, 259, 448
Masaccio, 101, 130, 133, 134, 336, 474
Masolino da Panicale, 130, 234
Matteo, 197
Maxwell, Sir W. Stirling, 417
Mazzolino, 244, 334
Medici, Cosmo de', 134, 223
  Francesco I., 436
  Giovanni, 193
  Giuliano, 150, 474
  Giulio, 328
Meeson, Luc Olivier, 266
Melito of Sardis, 16
Memlinc, Hans, 372
Mengs, Raphael, 345
Messner, Dr., 400
Meyer, 210
Michael, 82
  Angelo, 93, 131-6, 163, 180, 181, 184, 197, 206, 227, 241, 302, 315, 328, 371, 373, 403, 410, 422, 424, 426, 431, 436, 463, 464, 465-7, 470-3, 475-7, 486, 487
  Angelo Amerighi, 173
Millais, Sir J. E., 274, 331
Milman, Dean, 33, 403
Milton, 260
Minos, 466
Minucius, Felix, 22
Mommsen, 34
Mongeri, 169
Monkhouse, 201, 236, 374
Morales, 428
Morando, 380
Morelli, 134, 135, 162, 180, 248
Moretto, 205, 209, 214, 338, 378, 449, 450
Morone, 452
Moses, 34
  Chorenensis, 79
Münter, Bishop, 18
Muratori, 400
Murillo, 136, 176, 227, 264, 273, 331, 416

Naturalists, 136
Nero, 37
Nestorius, 141

Newman, 301
Niccolo Pisano, 118, 131, 299, 422
Nicholas, V., 300
Nicodemus, 82

Optatus of Milevis, 16
Orcagna, 131, 234, 299, 411, 442, 459, 462
Origen, 55, 56, 60, 71
Orpheus, 30, 31, 34, 39, 72, 93
Overbeck, 266, 333, 374, 452
Ovid, 32

Pablo de Cespedes, 348
Pacheco, 417
Palma Giovane, 429
Jacopo, 227
Vecchio, 155, 448
Palmezzano, 431
Panselinos, 263
Paolo di Dono, 134
Pater, 151
Paul, Saint, 32, 63, 106
IV., 474
IX., 467
Paula, 234
Paulinus of Nola, Saint, 17, 27, 58, 59, 123
Perret, 31, 284
Perugino, 116, 131, 134, 135, 163-5, 197, 202, 227, 241, 311, 337, 374, 408, 411, 414, 442, 454, 472
of Ferrara, 202
Peruzzi, 264
Pesaro, 211
Pesellino, 130
Peter Damian, Saint, 106
Petrarca, 124, 144
Phidias, 56
Philip, 79
Philo, 20
Piagnoni, 151
Piero dei Franceschi, 174, 227, 235, 309, 474
Pilate, 60, 71, 75
Pino, 347
Pinturicchio, 131, 134
Piombo, Sebastian del, see Sebastian.
Pirkheimer, 360
Pisano, Niccolo, see Niccolo.
Vittore, 227
Plato, 71
Pliny, 105
Pollajuolo, 130, 134, 379, 426
Pordenone, 227, 334, 427
Poussin, Nicolas, 144, 264, 321, 336, 488
Pradas, 348
Procope, 32
Prudentius, 27
Psyche, 34
Pusey, Dr., 83
Pythagoras, 71

Rabbula, 354, 401
Raffaelino del Garbo, 442
Ramsay, Professor, 17
Raphael, 83, 101, 116, 117, 131-3, 136, 150, 154, 155, 161-6, 171, 174, 175, 178, 180, 181, 183, 186, 191, 198, 200, 206, 207, 222, 227, 283, 289, 302, 310, 316, 317, 326, 328, 329, 337, 339, 374, 389, 409, 430, 442, 472
Rembrandt, 247, 264, 321, 331-3, 335, 422, 442, 452
Renan, 4
Reni, Guido, 173, 416
Reynolds, Sir J., 126, 128, 186
Ribalta, F. de, 348
Ribera, 110, 136, 207, 247, 418
Ricci, Bishop de, 405
Riccobaldo, 124
Richter, Jean Paul, 9, 200
Rio, 127
Robbia, 117, 181, 190, 270
Rochette, Raoul, 29
Romanino, 246, 338, 450
Romano, Giulio, 326
Rosa, Salvator, 131, 136
Roselli, Cosimo, 130, 227
Rosini, 271, 455
Rossetti, Dante, 180, 181, 229, 230, 277, 338
Rubens, 176, 264, 333, 337, 354, 371, 378, 389, 403, 415, 422, 477
Rumohr, Baron, 130
Ruskin, 115, 118, 124, 125, 127, 130, 131, 143, 151, 196, 197, 215, 247, 270, 271, 301, 326, 337, 393, 399, 415, 436, 450, 476, 488

Saint Abercius, see Abercius
Ambrose, see Ambrose
Augustine, see Augustine
Basil, see Basil
Bernard, see Bernard
Bonaventura, see Bonaventura
Chrysostom, see Chrysostom
Clement of Alexandria, see Clement
Cyril of Alexandria, see Cyril
Cyril of Jerusalem, see Cyril
Dominic, see Dominic
Ephrem Syrus, see Ephrem
Epiphanius, see Epiphanius
Euphemia, see Euphemia

Saint Felix of Nola, see Felix
Fortunatus, see Fortunatus
Francis of Assisi, see Francis
Gregory of Nazianzus, see Gregory
Hilary, see Hilary
James, see James
Jerome, see Jerome
John of Damascus, see John
Liberale, see Liberale
Luke, see Luke
Paul, see Paul
Paulinus of Nola, see Paulinus
Peter Damian, see Peter
Thomas Aquinas, see Thomas
William, see William
Salviati, 136
San Marco, 206
Santi, Giovanni, 135, 163, 164, 190
Sarto, Andrea del, 147, 173, 227
Sassoferrato, 156, 157, 487
Savile, Sir John, 381
Savoldo, 206
Savonarola, 74, 134, 151, 152, 206
Scheffer, Ary, 312
Schongauer, 160, 168, 264, 414
Scott, W. B., 368
Sebastian del Piombo, 181, 297, 328, 472
Seneca, 32
Serenus, 59
Severus, Alexander, 72
Signorelli, Luca, 134, 180, 227, 242, 259, 344, 379, 411, 463, 474
Simeon, 261
Simone di Martino, 190
Simonetta, 152
Simon Magus, 60
Sirach, Son of, 10
Sirens, 34
Sodoma, 259, 442
Spagnoletto, 136, 207, 418, 428
Squarcione, 134, 200
Stanley, Dean, 16, 40
Staupitz, 473
Steffan, 170
Stothard, 131
Symonds, J. A., 117, 193

Taine, 222
Taylor, Jeremy, 56
Tenebrosi, 136, 173
Teniers, 331, 332
Tertullian, 5, 13, 38, 41, 45, 54, 70, 94, 95
Thaddeus, 80
Thausing, 170, 271
Theodolind, 400
Theodora, 102
Theodoret, 73
Theophilus, 102
Thomas Aquinas, Saint, 82, 142
Tiberius, 83
Timoteo Viti, 135
Tintoret, 131, 132, 135, 227, 228, 243, 255, 303, 311, 315, 332-4, 343, 348, 374, 386, 412, 415, 429-31, 442, 454, 476
Tischendorf, 454
Titian, 110, 132, 135, 155, 204, 210, 211, 214, 227, 247, 329, 336, 347, 374, 383, 429, 445, 448, 449, 466, 467, 481, 484
Tommaso do Cavalieri, 471
of Florence, 133
Torregiano, 471
Trench, Archbishop, 30
Tulken, Van, 382
Turner, 131

Uccello, 134, 183, 227
Ugolino, 119, 387
Urban IV., 110
Urbino, 175, 471, 473
Duke of, 471

Valentinian, 26
Van der Werff, Adrian, 264
der Weyden, Roger, 384, 422, 431
Dyck, Sir Anthony, 264, 376, 383, 384, 389, 416, 429
Dyke, H., 264
Eyck, Jan, 48, 49, 192, 224
Tulken, 382
Vasari, 110, 122, 125, 182, 193, 220, 259, 296, 300, 312, 345-7, 387, 442, 474, 481
Vecchio Palma, 155, 448
Velasquez, 136, 249, 378, 381, 417
Venusti, Marcello, 373
Veretschlagen, 5
Veronese, 104, 129, 210, 216, 218, 227, 264, 297, 313, 315, 331, 334, 338, 343
Veronica, 81, 82, 368, 387, 388
Verrocchio, 116, 130, 134, 307, 309, 451
Villani, 124
Visconti, 95
Viti, 104, 229
Vittore, Pisano, 227
Vivarini, 135
Volterra, Daniele da, 422, 467
Vos, Martin de, 336

Werff, Adrian van der, 264
West, Benjamin, 321, 348

Weyden, Roger van der, 384, 423, 431
Wilhelm of Cologne, 388
Wilkie, Sir D., 126
Willett, K., 261
William, Saint, 200
Rufus, 82
Winer and Hase, 74
Wiseman, Cardinal, 28
Woermann, 193
Woltmann, Professor, 29, 107
Wornum, 130
Wouvermanns, 131

Zampieri, Domenico, 207
Zenale, Bernado, 347
Zinzendorf, 480
Zola, 450
Zurbaran, 107, 416

THE END

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